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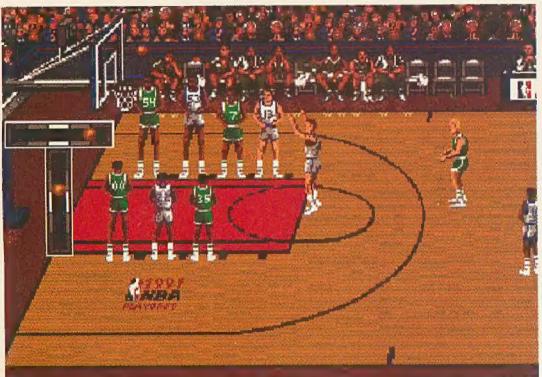
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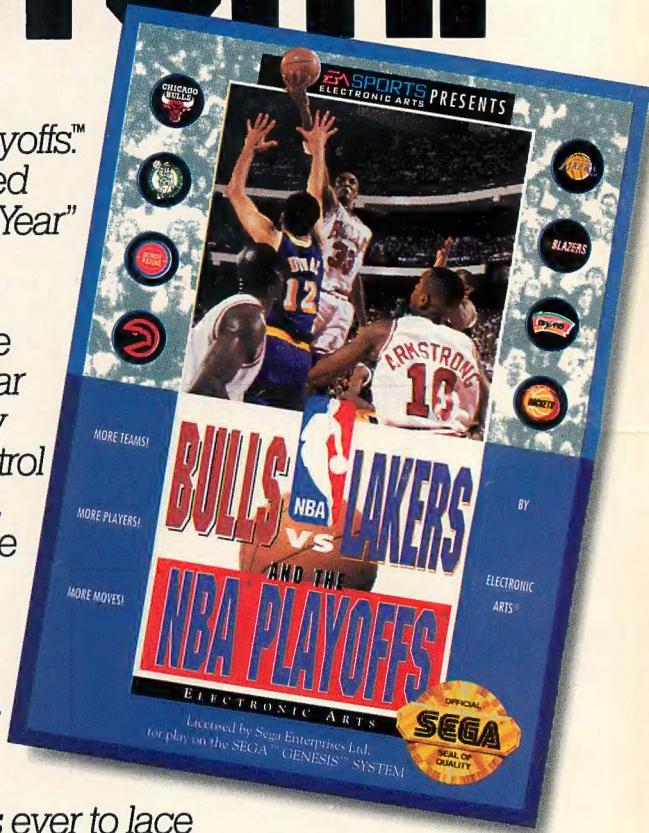
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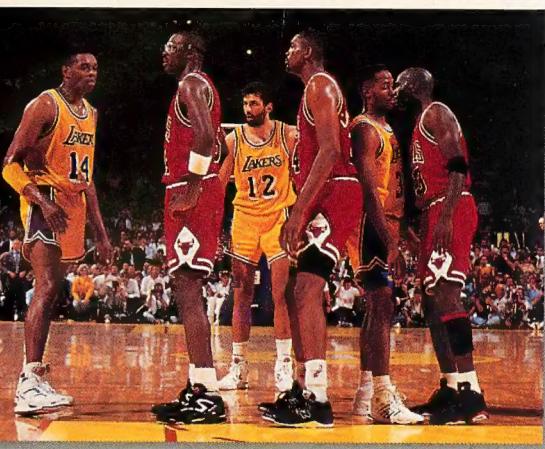
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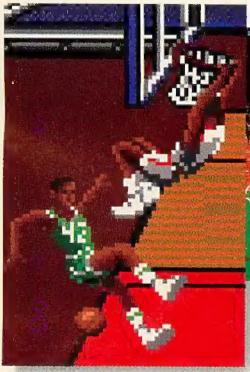
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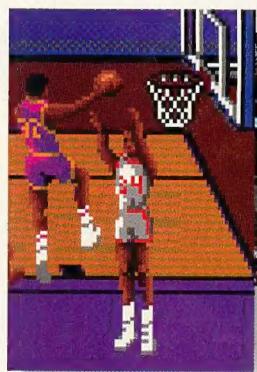
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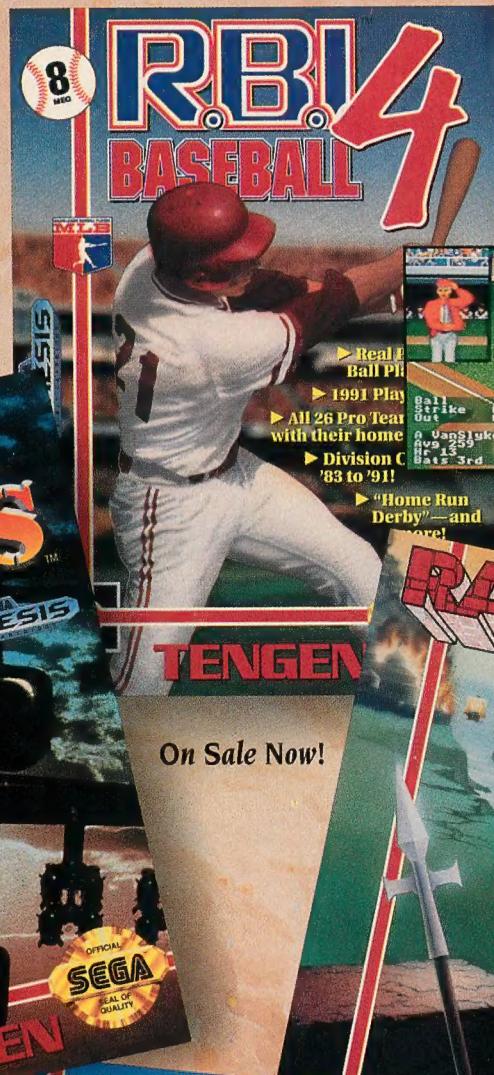
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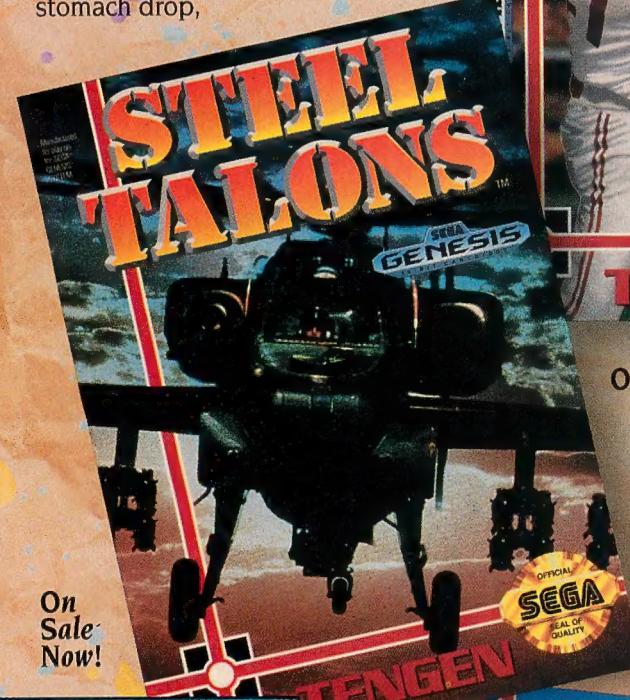
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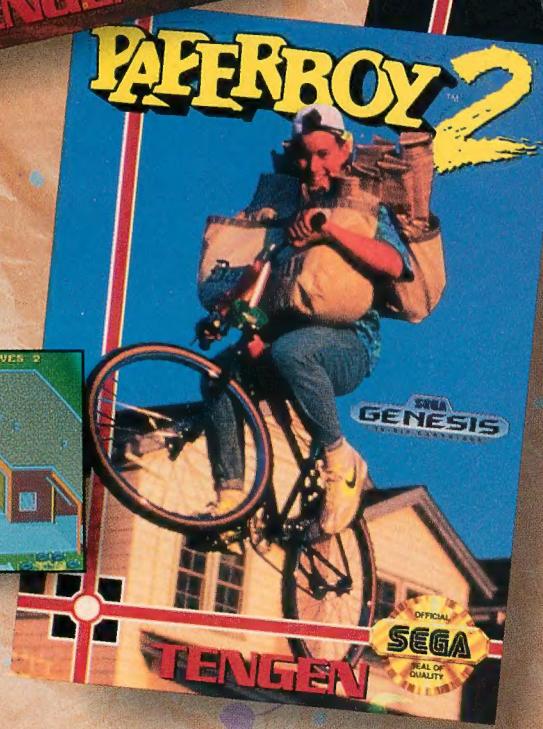
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CIRCLE #129 ON READER SERVICE CARD.

Cover: The elusive 3DO Interactive Multiplayer has been the target of misinformation and erroneous gossip in monthly electronic-gaming magazines. Turn to page 44 for the first *real* look at this revolutionary system.

Cover Art: Mike Cressy.

VOLUME V, ISSUE 2



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by Andy Eddy

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by the Editors of VG&CE

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VIDEOGAMES & COMPUTER ENTERTAINMENT (ISSN #1059-2938) is published monthly by L.F.P. Inc., 9171 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 300, Beverly Hills, CA 90210. Volume V, Issue 2. Copyright © 1993 All rights reserved. Nothing may be reproduced in whole or in part without written permission from the publisher. Return postage must accompany all manuscripts, drawings, disks, etc., if they are to be returned, and no responsibility can be assumed for unsolicited materials. All rights reserved on entire contents. U.S. subscription: \$19.95 for 12 issues. Foreign subscription: Add \$10 per year. Single copy: \$3.95. Change of address: Six weeks advance notice and both old and new addresses are needed. POSTMASTER: Send change of address to VIDEOGAMES & COMPUTER ENTERTAINMENT Magazine, P.O. Box 16927, North Hollywood, CA 91615. Second-class postage paid at Beverly Hills, California, and additional mailing offices. Address all advertising materials to Debby Eden—VIDEOGAMES & COMPUTER ENTERTAINMENT Magazine, 9171 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 300, Beverly Hills, CA 90210; (310) 858-7155. Nintendo is a Registered Trademark of Nintendo of America, Inc. Sega is a Registered Trademark of Sega of America, Inc. Atari is a Registered Trademark of Atari Corp. TTI is a Registered Trademark of Turbo Technologies, Inc.

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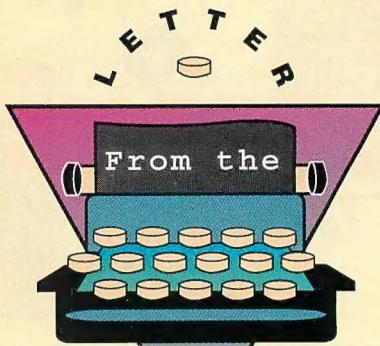
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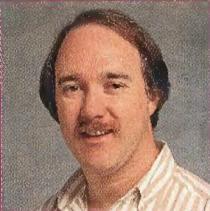


b EDITOR

So what's a game player to do? There

are so many choices now, and more on the horizon. My personal view of the situation is to enjoy what you have now. If you haven't already jumped in, and have the money ready to burn, you can pick up an SNES or Genesis—comparable systems, regardless of what many people say—for little cash, and get a lot of enjoyment out of it. Our awards feature has a good selection of software to keep you occupied.

Don't forget a computer as a viable alternative. The IBM PC is a venerable choice, and Mac owners are getting more gameware month after month.



The key, from my chair, is not to bother waiting for the "next great" hardware, because there'll always be improved hardware in the works. You could wait forever with that strategy. Enjoy what's available now, and put some bucks away for that "next great." Remember, the video-game industry is only about 20 years old, and in that time we've seen a bevy of hardware releases. Given the news we're hearing, there will be a batch more in short order—and more on their heels, to be sure.

In the meantime, keep checking out VG&CE each month for the honest, no-hype news of what's new and what's around the corner. We welcome your letters to tell us how you think we're doing. And, as always, thanks for reading VG&CE.

—Andy Eddy, Executive Editor



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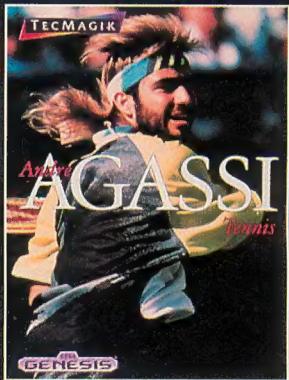


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CIRCLE #104 ON READER SERVICE CARD.



OH SAY, CAN YOU RPG?

As a gamer in my 30s, I have gotten into RPGs, as opposed to hack-'n-slash games or shooters. However, as a Genesis gamer, I have run into an irritating pattern. Just as you're given a clue and turn to begin your quest, an "animated" adversary appears and wastes an average of 60 seconds of your time flicking its wrist or tongue or leg at you. Now that's excitement!

And, as if you loved it so much the first time, those generous programmers have arranged for you to fight equally creative foes just about every eight seconds. How's that for getting your money's worth...NOT!

I'm not opposed to obstacles during my quest, so long as the programmers are using some of those precious bytes to breathe some life into the battle (*Sword of Vermilion* is a good example), but after awhile, the repetitive, cardboard cutout creatures are simply annoying. If I wanted a good fight, I'd buy an action game. Instead of trying to play both sides of the fence, the folks at Sega should establish what kind of game they intend to create, concentrate on the elements that distinguish that type of game from others and just "do one thing and do it well!" Take, for example, the *Solstice* series (*Solstice* by CSG Imagesoft on the NES, followed by Sony Imagesoft's *Equinox* on the SNES), which focuses on problem solving instead of hit points.

Trying to cater to both camps, Sega generally ends up annoying quest-game fans with constant stops and starts, while losing the interest of the *Street Fighter* crowd with lifeless battles. There are plenty of action-game carts and discs out

there already, so how about giving us something more for our money than a headache? An "adventure" might be nice!

—John Bice
Long Beach, California

You bring up a good point, John. It's possible that many of the game-producing companies (whose roots are based in Japan) are building a lot of their game designs on the RPG "formula" you noted. RPGs are currently the most popular genre in Japan, but it's important to consider that it may not be what most Americans are into. Unfortunately, companies see a popular game and play follow the leader. The Street Fighter II wave is already resulting in a glut of fighting games to be realized in the next year or so.

What do you do? The best thing is to write to game companies directly—though many of them will see your letter in VG&CE! Keep in mind that Sega is taking much of its development into the U.S., which will hopefully result in games you like to play. Sonic 2 was created in the U.S., and Sega has spent a lot of money on its "multimedia studio" for the development of future products, mainly CD-based games.

UNLOCKED NES MONSTER?

I read a letter recently in your *Q & A* column from reader David Lee, a boy whose father would not help him buy a Super NES because there

is no converter available to play his old NES games on the SNES. It made me feel a little sorry for the boy and a little irritated with his father for a couple of reasons.

For one thing, when one begins to play games on the SNES, from the pack-in *Super Mario World* game to the incredible *Street Fighter II*, one realizes its marked improvement in every area: great stereo sound, scaling and rotation, etc. Once you begin playing the new unit, it's awfully hard to go back to the old. But, hey, if you want to, you can. The two systems can easily be connected in tandem, allowing either to be played with a flick of the chosen system's power switch. I think it's foolish to deprive yourself—or your child—of the chance to experience great new games just because there's no converter available. How many people out there buy a Genesis system and then get the converter so that they can play older, outdated and outclassed Master System games?

I purchased my SNES the night before the day of its supposed release, and there were only three games available at that time: *Super Mario World*, *F-Zero* and *Pilotwings*. After experiencing the colors, the sound, the scaling and rotation, etc., I had to show my friends and younger brothers. Once my brothers played those games, of course they wanted an SNES too, but, at \$199 a pop, they needed Mom and Dad's help. Mom and Dad, however, had a response similar to David Lee's father: If they

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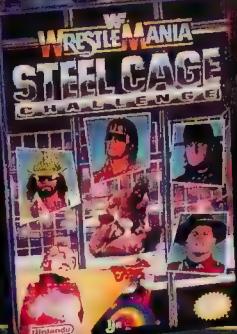
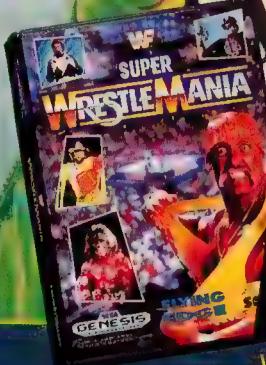
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can't play the old games on it, they're not going to buy it. Maybe it's because they don't want to accept the fact that their old machine is headed toward obsolescence, or maybe they feel taken that they've spent the money on the old system and now they spend more money on some new one. Will it ever end? Well, it probably won't, but no one really knows for sure. Accept the fact that once every three, four, five or six years (or more), there may be some new console or peripheral to spend money on; or forget video games altogether and start a coin collection or something.

Incidentally, my folks have since given in and purchased an SNES, and Mom is now a hardened *Zelda* fanatic. I never let her forget who convinced her to give in and buy it.

—Enrico Reynolds
Seattle, Washington

PS: Keep up the great work. Yours is the only video-game mag I'm not embarrassed to have on the coffee table. When someone picks it up, I know they're reading a well-written, intelligent magazine, not some kid-die mag.

Good analysis, Enrico. There are a lot of people, however, who would like to continue playing their NES games without hooking up two separate systems. Granted, it's a step backward, yes—like trying to enjoy a black-and-white TV after watching a color one—but it would have been nice for Nintendo to offer that option, as Sega did with the Genesis.

And thanks for the compliments on VG&CE. We're pretty proud of it, too!



CD, RIGHT OR ROM

Your readers' letters and Andy Eddy's editorial in your November issue were quite interesting, to say the least. First of all, on the Nintendo 32-bit CD-ROM system, I must admit it surprised me. It sounds to me like Nintendo was not ready to launch in January as it promised. I sincerely doubt that 32-bit technology will now be introduced by Nintendo at

the quoted price of \$199, which it announced to try to soften Sega's CD announcement. I'm all for new technology, but at what price and what hype?

This Nintendo announcement reminded me of the Consumer Electronics Show a couple of years ago when Nintendo had Mario try to explain why America was not ready for and did not want 16-bit gaming. Number-crunching aside, it's how much *fun* the games are, and how popular and broken-in the system is, that should really matter. I'm not sure if I can afford to buy the Sega CD-ROM, but I was one of the first ones to jump on the Genesis bandwagon years ago. Jumping on the CD-ROM bandwagon is a bit riskier. Nintendo's Super NES does have a slight technological advantage over the basic Genesis, while the Sega CD-ROM negates most of those advantages. And, as with the Genesis, Sega has beaten Nintendo to the punch with CD-ROM.

Chris Anderson's letter about his Game Gear also got me thinking. Many of us who have Game Gears also have the Genesis console and the Master System adapters for both the Game Gear and the Genesis. Now, remember how excited everyone got when they were able to play Master System games on the Game Gear? And how does that adapter work? By simply changing the pin configurations so they match. Why can't Sega or some other company just make an adapter to reverse that pin configuration? Game Gear owners could play Game Gear games on a television set through their Master System or through their Master System adapter on the Genesis! Since new Master System games are few and far between, this is an added bonus. And it would inspire more purchases of both Game Gears and Master System adapters for the Genesis! Now if only Sega would hire me.

—Jeff Silva
Olympia, Washington

PS: Do you know anything about a third-party portable system that is supposed to have adapters to let it

play NES, Super NES and Genesis games on it?

Sega CD is here, and selling off the shelves. Turn to local Sega CD owners to help you with your buying decision. At press time, Nintendo hasn't announced a firm date of release (or price) for the SNES CD-ROM. We've also spoken to some developers, and none of them have received development systems or even specs for an SNES CD-ROM. We expect it no sooner than early 1994. A \$200 price tag for a 32-bit CD unit will be a hard number to hit.

We've been told that making a Game Gear-to-TV adapter is too costly. Maybe someone will come up with a solution.

Finally, we haven't gotten any recent news of a multisystem-compatible, portable or console. Awhile ago, an Oregon company told us it had a "modular" system in the works, but we never heard another word. If it ever came out, the legal issues would probably have kept it off the shelves anyway.

MODERN OWNERS!

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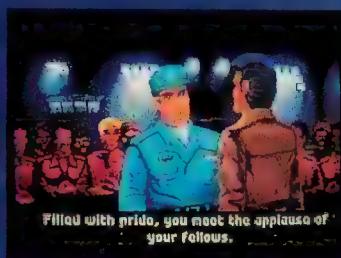
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It's like you're the star in a deep space action-adventure movie

Wingmates like "Spirit" cover your tail as you fight the tiger-like Kilrathi

Trounce the Kilrathi and be a hero. Lose and attend your own funeral

Nothing else will have prepared you for the look and feel of Wing Commander on your Super NES.

Here's why!

Wing Commander has incredible 3-D action, full-screen explosions, 33 super stereo soundtracks and CD game quality. But it plays on your Super Nintendo.

Wing Commander is the most extremely cool, 3-D Space Combat Simulator with more than 40 separate deep space missions that progress to near suicide dogfighting with the tiger-like Kilrathi. It's like an action-adventure movie - *and you're the star!*

Are you up for the challenge? This award-winning megahit is now available for the Super NES. Kick some Kilrathi butt with Wing Commander.



WING COMMANDER

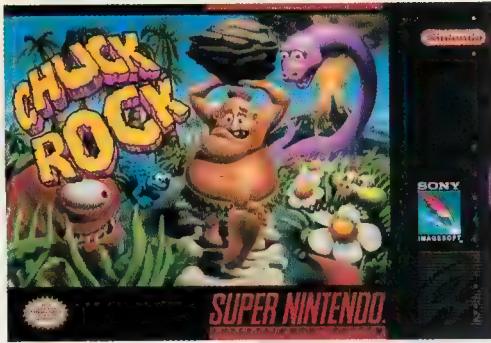
The 3-D Space Combat Simulator

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CHUCK YOUR SU



He's fat, he stinks and he's one of the best-loved characters ever to climb his way out of the primordial slime and onto your video screen.

In this rockin' new 16-bit adventure for your Super NES,

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you'll join Chuck Rock on his belly-bashing, odor-kicking, rock-tossing mission to rescue his wife Ophelia from arch-rival Gary Gritter. You and Chuck, who's equipped with a pea-sized brain and nuclear body odor, have to crush some pretty

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Nineteen levels set in five prehistoric worlds. Eye-popping graphics and very cool animation. If you wanna rock, you gotta get Chuck Rock.



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IMAGESOFT™

Even the best player has trouble with a game now and again, but where can you turn for help? **VIDEOGAMES & COMPUTER ENTERTAINMENT** has designed **Tip Sheet** to give you, the reader, answers to questions such as, "How do I defeat the end boss on this level?" or "I've looked everywhere, but I can't find the blue vase." So, if you're having a problem with a game, write to us, and our group of experts will do everything they can to solve it. Send your letters to:

VG&CE

9171 Wilshire Blvd.,

Suite 300

Beverly Hills, CA 90210

Attn: Tip Sheet



BY
CHRIS BIENIEK

I just got my Sega CD, and I love playing *Night Trap*. I'm flipping through the rooms pretty quickly, but I keep missing important events (like the color-code changes) because I'm busy trying to trap the creatures or watch what's happening in the other rooms. Can you offer any advice?

—Randy Lincoln
Westminster, Colorado

You answered your own question, Randy; if you're going to trap all of the creatures and finish the game, you can't take the time to enjoy too much of the nonessential activity in the house. You might enjoy watching the girls sing the *Night Trap* theme in the living room, but you'd be wasting your time there. In fact, it's not even a good idea to hang around and watch your victims fall into the traps. As soon as you hit the B button and the word "Captured" starts to flash, they're as good as gone, and you should be moving on to check out another room.

To help you with the code changes, here's a complete list of where and when you can hear the characters discussing the code colors. These are the exact times when the code changes are revealed, so try to check in on the conversations a good ten seconds before the times shown:



5:40 in the entryway



9:00 in the living room



13:37 in the entryway



14:15 in the living room

There's a creature that appears in the living room at 5:54 which must be trapped before you change the access code from blue to the next new color; after that, you can just go ahead and change the codes as soon as you hear the conversations.

Incidentally, it may interest you to learn that the footage for *Night Trap* was filmed several years ago, well before its star, Dana Plato, was arrested for armed robbery. Both *Night Trap* and Sony Imagesoft's *Sewer Shark* were originally developed by Hasbro for a game machine called the *Nemo*, which never saw a mass-market release.

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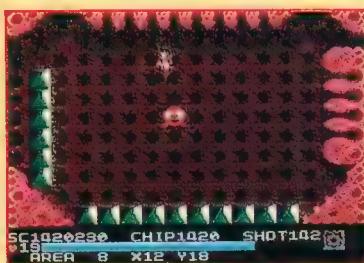


Have you ever heard of a game called *The Guardian Legend* for the NES? I'm having a lot of trouble with this one. I've worked my way through to Area 8, and there's a boss character at coordinates X12-Y18 that I just can't beat. I've thrown everything at him! Can you help?

—Aaron Lapolli
Calera, Alabama

Created by Irem and Compile—and released by Brøderbund in this country—The Guardian Legend is an old, personal favorite. The boss you're referring to is a red-colored relative of the tentacled ball from Area 3, and, yes, it does appear that none of your weapons affect him. For some extra help, sneak past the walls before you get trapped into the battle and proceed to location X12-Y23. You'll find a Blue Lander, which should give you just enough energy to go back and finish him off.

When you return, blast him continuously with your standard gun as well as the Multibullets weapon. Start shooting as soon as he appears on the screen, and stand your ground; if you run away, he'll get you from behind. Your energy meter must be completely full for this strategy to work. When it does, you'll get a Red Lander to increase your power chip maximum.



SC1020230 CHIP1020 SHOT102

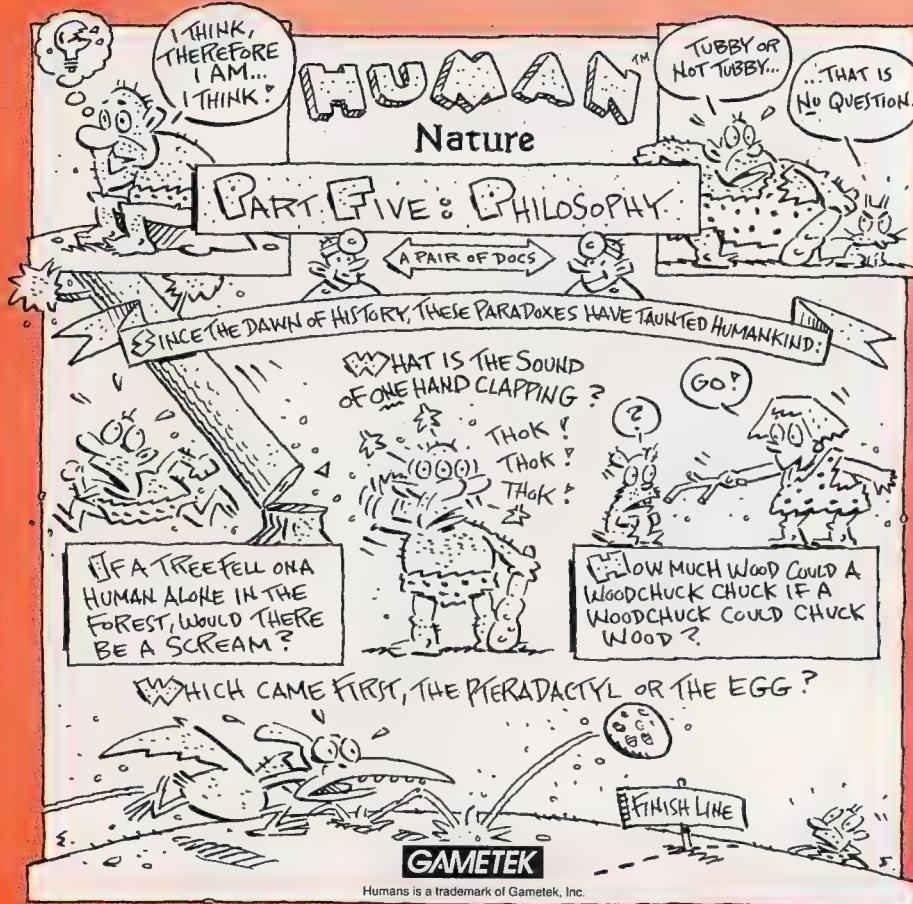
AREA 8 X12 Y18

I have a question concerning *Cosmic Fantasy 2* for the TurboGrafx-CD. At the first fortress of Galam on the eastern side of the Northern continent—where Lord Digin supposedly terrorizes villagers—I can't find the entrance to the deeper dungeon. I just keep coming to dead ends. Is there something I'm missing, like a secret entrance or passageway?

—Luciano Rossetti
Burbank, California

Did you find Alan's Bow in the chest at the top level of the castle? If so, you need to return it to Alan in the city nearest to the castle. When Alan joins your party, he'll tell you about a secret passage that leads to the deeper dungeon. It's in a northwest corner near the entrance—you'll be able to find it by pressing the I button to search in the corner.

But there's a catch: Even if you know where the secret passage is located, the game won't let you go through until you're told where it's located. Talk to everybody in the game, it's possible you may have missed some other important clues.



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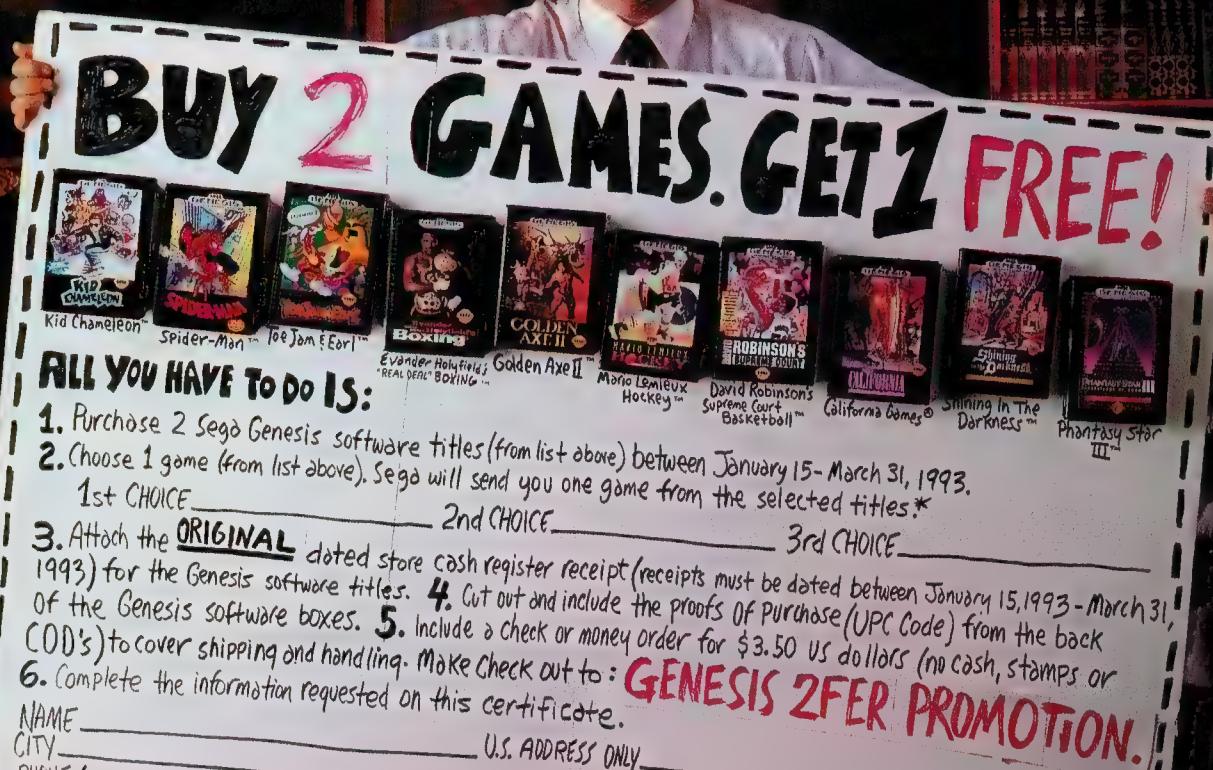
For the name of your nearest Turbo Touch 360 retailer or to place an order, call 1-800-858-7429

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Sega reserves the right to send a substitute title in the event that titles requested are not available. Sega will send you one of the Genesis cartridges, right to twelve weeks from receipt of all completed redemption materials. Offer not valid in combination with any other Sega Genesis offer. Valid in the U.S. only. Void where prohibited. Sega, Genesis, and all game titles are trademarks of SEGA unless otherwise noted below. Spider-Man and the distinctive stylized letters therefrom are trademarks of Marvel Entertainment Group, Inc. and are used with permission. © 1992 J.V.P. California Games and Ego are registered trademarks of Ego, Inc. © 1992 3866 3375 Arden Road, Hayward, CA 94540. All rights reserved.

Pictured:

His name is Howard Peay. (It's pronounced *Pea*, like in *Peanut Butter Sandwich*.) But, you can call him *Mr. Peay*.

The head money guy

He's the top bean-counter at Sega. What does that mean? He takes care of the cash. He makes sure we stay

at Sega,

in business. And now, (wake up this is the part you care about) he's giving away games. If you buy two of the

with the only thing

Sega™ Genesis™ games on his coupon, he'll give you one more for *free*. This is a big moment for Mr. Peay. The

he ever

whole coupon thing was his idea. Just look at him, he's really proud of it. Okay, that's enough. Go get the scissors.

designed.



CIRCLE #111 ON READER SERVICE CARD.

Top Coin-ops for November 1992

Figures are courtesy of *RePlay* magazine, based on an earnings-opinion poll of arcade operators.

Best Upright Videos

1. *Lethal Enforcer* by Konami
2. *Mortal Kombat* by Williams
3. *Street Fighter II: Championship Edition* by Capcom
4. *Terminator 2* by Midway
5. *Space Gun* by Taito
6. *Double Axle* by Taito
7. *Sunset Riders* by Konami
8. *Super High Impact* by Midway
9. *Steel Gunner* by Namco
10. *Turbo Out Run* by Sega

Best Video Software

1. *Art of Fighting* by SNK
2. *World Heroes* by SNK
3. *Street Fighter II* by Capcom
4. *Neck N' Neck* by Bunday
5. *Aero Fighters* by McO'River
6. *Raiden* by Fabtek
7. *Wrestlefest* by Technos
8. *Irem Skins* by Irem
9. *Varth* by Romstar
10. *King of the Monsters 2* by SNK

Top Video Games for November 1992

The lists of top-selling video-game software are provided courtesy of Babbage's.

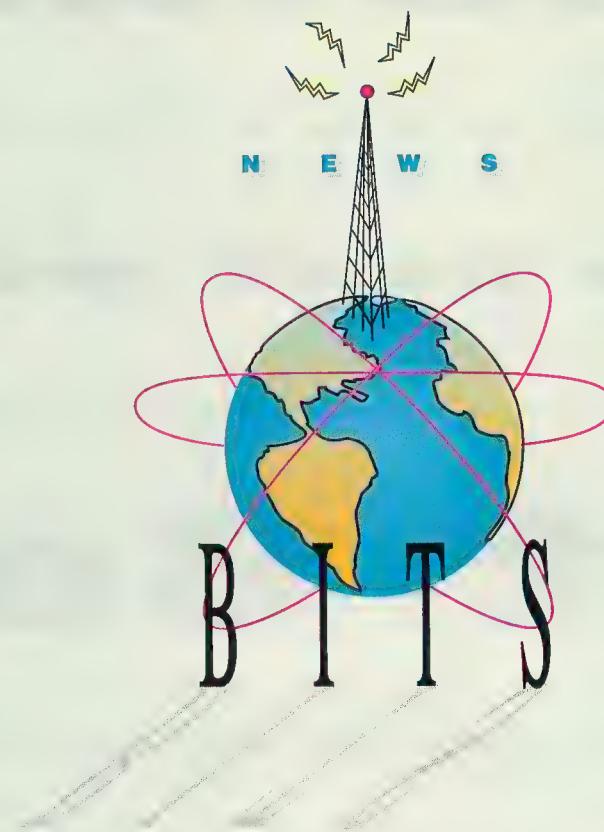
Super NES

1. *John Madden Football '93* by Electronic Arts
2. *Super Mario Kart* by Nintendo
3. *Street Fighter II* by Capcom
4. *Mario Paint* by Nintendo
5. *Super Star Wars* by JVC/LucasArts
6. *Mystic Quest* by Square Soft
7. *NHLPA Hockey '93* by Electronic Arts
8. *NCAA Basketball* by Nintendo
9. *The Legend of Zelda: A Link to the Past* by Nintendo
10. *Wings 2: Aces High* by Namco

Sega Genesis

1. *Sonic the Hedgehog 2* by Sega
2. *John Madden Football '93* by Electronic Arts
3. *NFL Sports Talk Football '93* by Sega
4. *NHLPA Hockey '93* by Electronic Arts
5. *WWF Super Wrestlemania Challenge* by Flying Edge
6. *Evander Holyfield's "Real Deal" Boxing* by Sega

COMPILED BY DAVID S. MOSKOWITZ



Radio Shack Debuts VIS

Radio Shack has released a new interactive compact disc player, the Memorex MD-2500 Video Information System (VIS).

VIS capabilities include: VGA/MCGA compatible video modes on a TV display; video modes supporting up to 16 million colors; simultaneous play of three types of audio (CD Audio, synthesized MIDI and waveform); and the ability to process MS-DOS, Microsoft Windows and multimedia IBM PC applications.

The MD-2500 comes with a special CD version of Compton's MultiMedia Encyclopedia as well as a Save-It memory cartridge and will be carried by almost all 7,000 Radio Shack stores for the suggested retail price of \$699.

Over 50 software developers have signed on as VIS licensees, and upcoming games for VIS include *Amazon* (Access), *Inspector Gadget* (Azeroth), *King's Quest V* (Sierra On-Line), *The 7th Guest* (Virgin), *Sherlock Holmes, Consulting Detective 1 & 2* (ICOM) and *The Awesome Adventures*



of *Victor Vector and Yondo Adventure 1: The Vampire's Coffin* (Sanctuary Woods).

FTC Clears Nintendo of Antitrust Charges

The Federal Trade Commission has closed its antitrust investigation of Nintendo Co. and Nintendo of America Inc. without taking action against the video-game manufacturers.

Atari Corp. had filed suit against Nintendo in 1989 alleging that Nintendo's exclusive licensing agreements constituted a monopoly and restraint of trade. Earlier this year a U.S. District Court jury cleared Nintendo of all charges.

Lightwave Technologies Releases Video-Game Speakers

Lightwave Technologies has released MicroSound Amplified Stereo Speakers. The speakers are useable with any of the major game systems and provide the stereo sound for programs supporting stereo. The speakers may be powered by two "C" batteries each or an AC adapter, and are available for \$24.99 per pair.

Cosmic Fantasy 2

Beyond Reality.
Beyond Imagination.
Beyond Belief.
An immense RPG only
for the Turbografx-CD.
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7. *Night Trap* by Sega
8. *Taz-Mania* by Sega
9. *Cobra Command* by Sega
10. *Sewer Shark* by Sony Imagesoft

NES

1. *Tecmo Super Bowl* by Tecmo
2. *Dragon Warrior IV* by Enix
3. *Tecmo NBA Basketball* by Tecmo
4. *Tetris* by Nintendo
5. *Super Mario Bros. 3* by Nintendo
6. *TMNT III: The Manhattan Project* by Konami
7. *Super Mario Bros. 2* by Nintendo
8. *Ferrari Grand Prix Challenge* by Acclaim
9. *Monopoly* by Parker Bros.
10. *The Black Bass* by Hot-B

TurboGrafx-16/Turbo Duo

1. *Air "Zonk"* by TTI
2. *Hit the Ice* by TTI
3. *Exile* by Working Designs
4. *Dragon Slayer* by TTI
5. *Cosmic Fantasy 2* by Working Designs
6. *Order of the Griffon* by TTI
7. *Loom* by TTI
8. *Falcon* by TTI
9. *Shape Shifter* by TTI
10. *Prince of Persia* by TTI

Nintendo Game Boy

1. *Super Mario Land 2: 6 Golden Coins* by Nintendo
2. *Kirby's Dream Land* by Nintendo
3. *Yoshi* by Nintendo
4. *Super Mario Land* by Nintendo
5. *The Simpsons 2: Bart vs. The Juggernauts* by Acclaim
6. *Play Action Football* by Nintendo
7. *Home Alone II* by T+HQ
8. *Tecmo Bowl* by Tecmo
9. *NBA All-Star Challenge 2* by LJN
10. *The Simpsons: Escape From Camp Deadly* by Acclaim

Sega Game Gear

1. *Taz-Mania* by Sega
2. *Sonic the Hedgehog 2* by Sega
3. *Batman Returns* by Sega
4. *Joe Montana Football* by Sega
5. *Columns* by Sega
6. *Clutch Hitter* by Sega
7. *Ax Battler* by Sega
8. *Super Monaco GP II* by Sega
9. *Out Run Europa* by U.S. Gold

Interplay Establishes BBS

Interplay Productions has established a customer support bulletin board that will contain hints, product upgrades, game demonstrations and technical support. The board can be reached at (714) 252-2822 and has operating parameters of 300-14.4k baud using 8 bits, no parity and one stop bit (8N1), supporting c.32bis and v.42bis.

**NES Classics Return at Lower Prices**

Nintendo has rereleased *The Legend of Zelda*, *Zelda II: The Adventures of Link*, *Punch-Out* and *Metroid* for a suggested retail price of \$29.99 each.

MicroProse Reports Record Revenue

MicroProse Inc. (NASDAQ: MPRS) announced fiscal revenues for the second fiscal 1993 quarter of \$13,600,000, up 48% from the same period last year. Earnings per share increased 2¢ to 18¢ compared to the previous year, even though MPS now has approximately 6.8 million shares outstanding, compared to last year's 5 million.

Sunsoft Licenses Pirates Cartoon

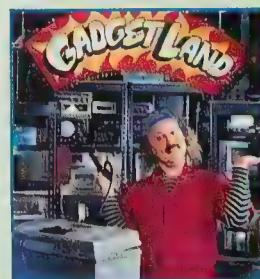
Sunsoft has now signed a licensing agreement with Hanna-Barbera Productions for *The Pirates of Dark Water*, a Sunday morning cartoon currently seen on the *Fantastic World of Hanna-Barbera*. Sunsoft will release a Sega Genesis and Super NES version of its *Pirates* game, the latter including first-person battles.

**Triax Releases Giant Turbo Touch 360**

Triax Technologies has created a three-foot-wide version of its Turbo Touch 360 controller for the Super NES. Anyone interested in the \$2,000 product should call (800) 85-TRIA.

American Laser Arcade Games Come to Sega CD

American Laser Games (ALG) has signed a licensing agreement with Sega and will be releasing its arcade laser disc-based games for the Sega CD using the Sega Menacer. The first two games to be



converted to the Sega CD will be *Mad Dog McCree*, a Western shootout and *Gallagher's Gallery*. Featuring stand-up comedian Gallagher, *Gallery* allows players to destroy an assortment of household appliances and food items.

Gamer's Edge Releases Wolfenstein Fantasy Game

Gamer's Edge has released three fantasy action games for the IBM PC using an engine similar to that employed in ID's *Wolfenstein 3-D*. *The Catacomb Abyss*, *The Catacomb Armageddon* and *The Catacomb Apocalypse* are available through Softdisk Publishing at (800) 831-2694. Those wishing to download the shareware version of *The Catacomb Abyss* should call via modem (508) 365-2359 or (508) 368-4137.

Gallup Poll Finds Kids Want Video Games Most This Holiday Season

A Gallup Poll of 500 children, ages seven to 16 found that, when asked what they "really want[ed]" for gifts, 63% said a video-game system, 54% chose a portable video-game system and 43% wished for game software. Among boys, the top three categories were the same, with the distribution of desire at 71%, 60% and 58%, respectively. For girls, the breakdown was video-game system 54%, portable video-game system 48%, prerecorded videotape 31%, with video-game software and board games both tied at 27%.



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10. *Olympic Gold Barcelona '92* by U.S. Gold

Atari Lynx Games

(All Games this month produced by Atari)

1. *Baseball Heroes*
2. *NFL Football*
3. *Batman Returns*
4. *World Class Soccer*
5. *Hockey*
6. *Hard Drivin'*
7. *Gauntlet*
8. *Shadow of the Beast*
9. *Steel Talons*
10. *Zarlor Mercenary*

Top IBM PC Games for September 1992

The following list of top-selling computer software was compiled by PC Research of Washington, D.C., based on sales data received from Software Etc., Electronics Boutique, Babbage's and WaldenSoftware.

Top 10 IBM PC Games

1. *Falcon 3.0: Operation Fighting Tiger* by Spectrum HoloByte
2. *Wing Commander* by Origin
3. *Darklands* by MicroProse
4. *Might & Magic: Clouds of Xeen* by New World Computing
5. *B-17: Flying Fortress* by MicroProse
6. *Civilization* by MicroProse
7. *Birds of Prey* by Electronic Arts
8. *Quest for Glory III* by Sierra On-Line
9. *AI Michaels Announces Hardball II* by Accolade
10. *LINKS 386 Pro* by Access

Top IBM PC Education Games

1. *Where in the World Is Carmen Sandiego?* by Brøderbund
2. *Mavis Beacon Teaches Typing* by Software Toolworks
3. *Your Personal Trainer for the S.A.T.* by Davidson
4. *New Math Blaster Plus* by Davidson
5. *AlgebraBlaster Plus* by Davidson
6. *Mario Typing* by Interplay
7. *Reader Rabbit I* by Learning Company
8. *Mickey's ABC's* by Disney
9. *Playroom* by Brøderbund
10. *Where in the U.S.A. Is Carmen Sandiego?* by Brøderbund

Hughes Training Premieres Star Wars Simulation

Hughes Training premiered the working prototype of *Mirage*, a multiplayer game simulator in the same vein as *BattleTech*.



Mirage boasts more advanced computer graphics and was designed so games can be switched out—like a home video-game system. It's expected to debut late this year in an amusement park arena, likely in Japan.

Hughes, a major leader in flight simulations for the U.S. military and airline industry, is working with LucasArts Entertainment on the project.

The *Mirage* game demonstrated, *Vernost*, is based on the *Star Wars* movies and is similar to *Rescue on Fractalus*, a much-heralded Atari computer game from Lucasfilm Games a decade ago. Rebel and Imperial forces on the planet Vernost battle for control of a natural fluid that works fuel-efficiency wonders for starships and medical cures on humans. Players pilot X-wing fighters through canyons, blowing away Imperial TIE fighters and searching for the special juice.

VG&CE's own Howard Wen said *Vernost* definitely captures the spirit of *Star Wars*, even if it reminded him too much of *Fractalus*, and gave him motion sickness from piloting the X-wing.

Sierra Sells Ad Space in Space Quest

Sierra On-Line has announced that Sprint has purchased graphic display space in the upcoming *Space Quest V: The Next Mutation*. The Sprint logo will appear prominently in the game's demo and on communications equipment that Roger Wilco uses within the game.

Atari Drops Lynx Price

Atari has dropped the suggested retail price of the basic Lynx unit to \$79.99. This special price on the 16-bit color portable game will last until January 31, 1993.

VG&CE REPLAY

February 1991: The Federal Court of Canada rules against Nintendo's claim that the Game Genie erodes its profits from NES games. Finding this claim unwarranted, the Court denies the company's application for an injunction against the Galoob device. Months later, a U.S. District Court comes to a similar ruling and lets the Game Genie out of the bottle in the United States, too.

February 1989: The once arcade division of Atari Inc., Atari Games, files a monopoly suit against Nintendo.

A move possibly to stem the tide away from their Tengen division, which declares itself independent of the NES third-party contract. Meanwhile, Atari Corp.—Atari Inc.'s former home division—announces selling its 26 millionth game system. Sounds impressive until figures reveal that 23 million units were sold by the original owners of Atari.

February 1984: Mattel Toys dumps their Intellivision game system. Rights to the game unit are sold to outside investors headed by a Mat-

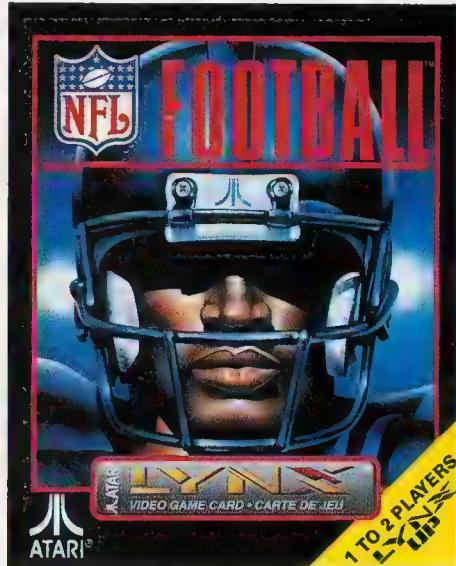
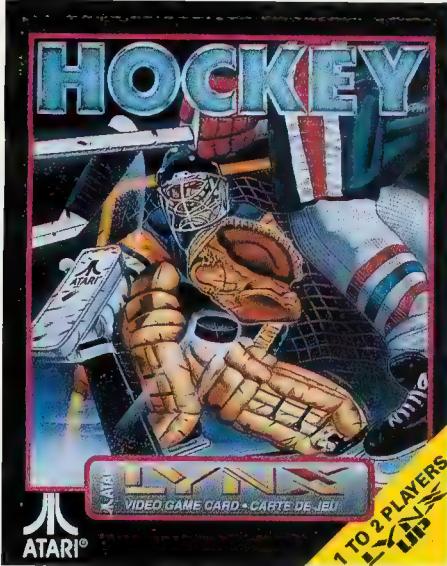
THE HEART OF ELECTRONIC GAMING IN ST. VALENTINE'S MONTH

tel senior V.P. Mattel had already shipped a limited number of the Aquarius, a home computer version of the Intellivision, making the news especially non-celebratory.

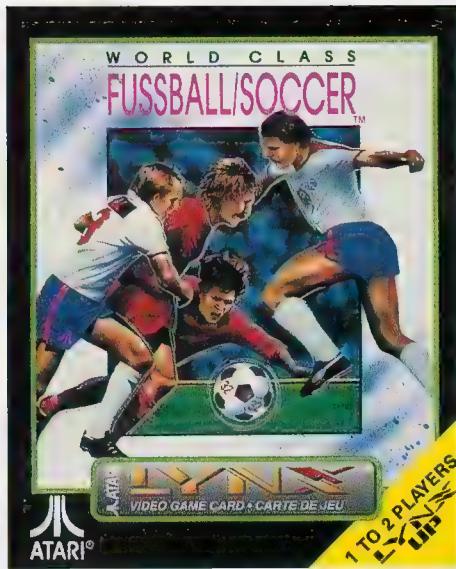
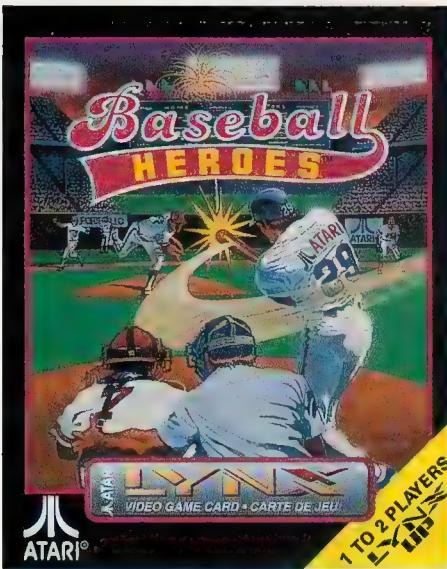
February 1983: ZAP! As if its earlier push-button keyboard weren't bad enough, the Texas Instruments 99/4A home computer's power supply—it is revealed by TI—could cause lethal electric shocks if touched. Owners are urged to send in their faulty power supplies for replacements.

Howard Wen

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If you were

Why is their screen only one color? Why that color? Some questions we just can't answer. We make Game Gear™. A multi-color portable video game

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system with a monitor so good you can turn it into a mini-television. All you've got to do is pop in the TV Tuner which is sold separately. But the best

and had an I.Q. less than

thing about it is the games. And by now there are 75 of them available. Like Sonic The Hedgehog 2™, Taz-Mania™, Streets of Rage™, Shinobi 2™, and

twelve

Batman™ Returns. But don't think we're going to stop there. After we take a few minutes to catch our breath, it's back to the drawing board, designing new

then you wouldn't care which

games, and making sure Game Gear remains the number one color portable, which should be no problem considering the competition.

portable you had.

(Of course you wouldn't care if you drank from the toilet either.)



Tips are graded on a scale of one to five joysticks. The more joysticks that are colored in, the more valuable the hint is.

Blow the dust off those old games, and try out some of our new hints! If you have some great hints and tips for us, just put them on a piece of paper and send them to: VG&CE, Attn: Easter Egg Hunt, 9171 Wilshire Blvd, Suite 300, Beverly Hills, CA 90210. The author of each new tip we use will receive \$10. Write neatly, and be sure to include your name and complete address!



BY
CHRIS BIENIEK

Batman Returns

(ATARI FOR THE LYNX)



Having a tough time with this outrageously difficult Lynx game? Try our superpowerful Easter egg, and your troubles will be over!

At the title screen (the one with the Batman logo in the background), enter this secret code: Press Up eight times, Down 12 times, Left 15 times, Right 19 times and **OPTION 1** 27 times. (No, we're not kidding!) Then press A or B to start the game. Once the action starts, hit the **PAUSE** button and you can press **OPTION 1** to skip to the next level. Pressing **OPTION 2** while the game is paused will make the Caped Crusader invincible! Be careful, because you can still be killed by falling off buildings and such.



tom of the screen will disappear for a second.

Notice that the name of the course on which the ghost has been saved will appear in yellow on the "Course Select" menu—this confirms that the ghost racer's movements have been stored in the battery-backed memory, and will remain intact even when the game is switched off. The backup RAM can only store data for one ghost at a time. To retrieve the ghost from memory and race against him or her, choose that course and hold the L or R button down while pressing B when the screen asks, "Is this O.K.?" and the arrow is pointing to the word "yes."

Finally, here's a great code that gives you five new courses in the one-player Time Trials or two-player Match Race modes. At the "Course Select" menu, make sure the arrow is pointed at the words "Mushroom Cup" and hit these buttons on the top of the controller: L, R, L, R, L, R, R. Then press A, and the words "Special Cup" will appear. These are the "hidden" courses that open up when you've won a gold trophy in each of the first three cups in the 100cc GP mode. Check out the incredible "Rainbow Road" course—this one's for Super Mario Kart perfectionists only!



Super Mario Kart

(NINTENDO FOR THE SUPER NES)



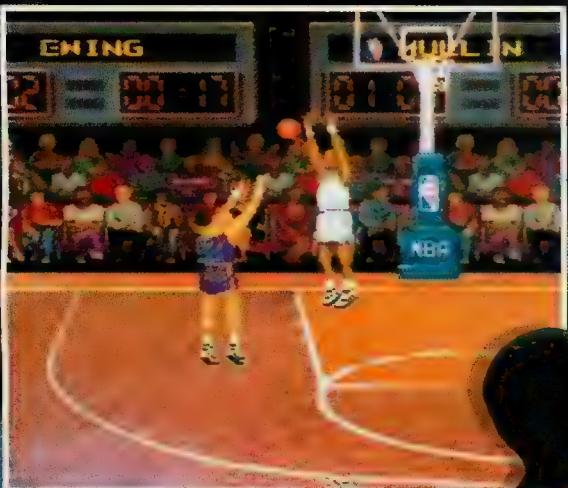
If last month's collection of tricks and tips wasn't enough, we've got a few more secrets to tell you about this wild racing game. First, here's a trick that allows you to start a one-player game with Controller 2. If you hold down the L and R buttons while pressing **START** on the second controller, you can play in the GP mode or Time Trials with your character on the bottom half of the screen.

In another top-secret Easter egg, we've found a way to save the data for your "ghost racer" in the cartridge's backup RAM. (Remember that the ghost racer will only appear if you've completed five laps of a Time Trial without touching any obstacles or barriers.) When you have a ghost that you'd like to save, perform this trick at the menu screen that reads, "CHANGE COURSE, RETRY, CHANGE DRIVER," etc.: Hold down the L, R and Y buttons and press X. You'll hear a chime, and the "Best 5/Best Lap" data at the bottom of the screen will disappear for a second.



Hang on to your hats! In addition to more tricks for hot titles like Super Mario Kart and Faceball 2000, we've got more exclusive Game Genie codes direct from Galoob. And try not to drool on your Lynx when you see our red-hot cheats for that machine!

By the way, if you're one of the readers who copies tricks from other magazines and sends them to us, don't bother; in case you haven't noticed, our competitors are the ones who are running tips and tricks that we've already printed, not the other way around.



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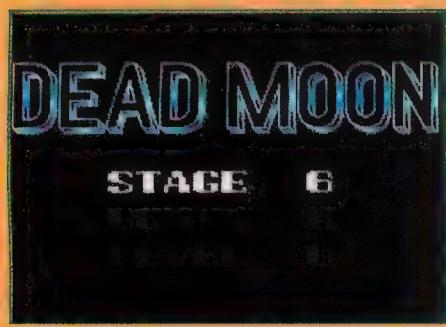
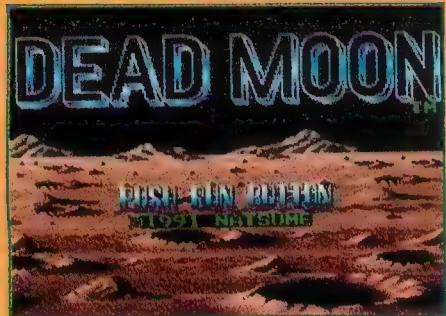
continued from page 30

Dead Moon

(TTI FOR THE TURBOGRAFX-16/TURBO DUO)



To access a stage-select and sound-test menu in this graphically impressive shoot-'em-up, try this trick at the title screen: Point the control pad to the lower left and hold it there, hold down the A and B buttons and press RUN.



Cobra Command

(SEGA FOR THE GENESIS WITH SEGA CD)



VG&CE fan James R. Geiger of Vinton, Iowa, was the first to break the news about this Sega CD Easter egg. First, press **START** at the *Cobra Command* title screen. When you see the words "Game Start" and "Config Mode," press Up, Down, Left and Right. You'll hear a short explosion sound. Next, go to the "Config Mode" menu and you'll find a new difficulty setting, "Training." In the Training mode, you can continue at the point you had reached when you were killed instead of being sent back to the beginning of the stage.



Faceball 2000

(BULLET-PROOF FOR THE GAME BOY)

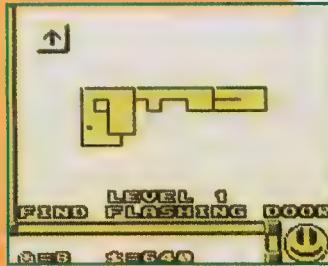
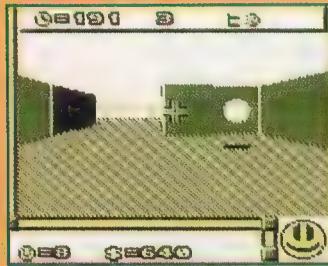
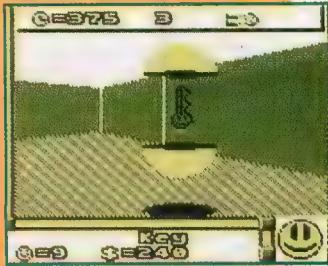
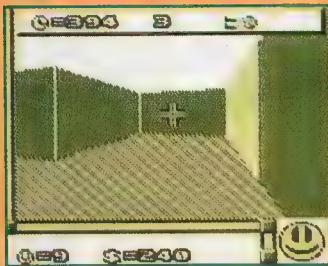


Continuing our series of *Faceball 2000* Easter eggs, here's the story so far: In the Cyberscape game, shoot the Level 1 exit door five times to warp to a secret room with exits to levels 10, 15, 20 and 25, then shoot at the nine-lives pod in the secret room three times to change it into a key that opens

up another secret room, this time with exits to levels 30, 35 and 40.

Here's the latest piece of the puzzle: In the second part of the secret room, note that one of the pods didn't disappear when you took armor from it. Travel to the west wing of the secret room and find the wall that faces south. (When you face the south wall, there will be a flashing warp door to your right; that's the exit to Level 40.) Shoot the south wall once, then touch it. Then go back around the corner to the armor pod. Touch the pod and shoot it, and it will give you a key that opens the south wall to a third secret area!

Be careful in the new area, though—there are two ninjas waiting in this room. Defeat them, and you'll find a Level 2 armor pod, a Level 2 Automag pod and warp doors that lead to Cyberscape levels 45, 50 and 55.



Toki

(ATARI FOR THE LYNX)



In the *Gaming on the Go* column in our October issue, we told you how you could enter Toki's "freak-out mode" by pressing Up and **OPTION 1** before the title screen appears and holding them down through the entire demo sequence. VG&CE reader Michael E. Ahrens wrote to tell us about a similar *Toki* Easter egg: If you hold Up and **OPTION 1** during the entire "Continue" countdown at the end of the game, you'll see a small white speck in the middle of a black screen. If you alternate pressing the control pad and A or B buttons rapidly, the spot will slowly inflate like a balloon, revealing itself to be a digitized photo of the game's programmers!



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The TELEPLAY™ SYSTEM by BATON hits Earth in Spring 1993. It uses the latest in telecommunication developments to let you play against someone in another location. It comes equipped with TERRAN WARS, a head-to-head, fast action, arcade style space game, yet it costs about the same as one 8 megabit cartridge! 8 additional action-packed titles will be released in 1993! Want to learn more? Call (602) 437-9659.

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continued from page 32

Alisia Dragoon

(SEGA FOR THE GENESIS)



We've blown this action cartridge wide open to uncover a complete collection of cheats and tricks that'll make your quest for the evil Baldour look like a walk in the park!

First, turn the game on. When the word "SEGA" disappears from the screen, hold down the A button. When the words "Produced by Game Arts" disappear from the screen, release the A button and hold down the B button. When the words "Associated with GAIMAX" disappear from the screen, release the B button and hold down the C button. Finally, when the words "Music Composed by Mecano Associates" disappear from the screen, release the C button and press the **START** button. You'll hear a bubbling musical signal to confirm that the code

has been properly executed.

Once that code is in place, you'll be able to do all kinds of crazy tricks with the second control pad while a game is in progress. Here's a list of secrets you can use:

Press A on Controller 2—Pause the game. Tapping the button repeatedly will give you a frame-by-frame, slow-motion effect.

Press B on Controller 2—Unpause the game or deactivate the slow-motion feature.

Press A on Controller 2, then hold Up on Controller 1 while pressing B on Controller 2—Refill Alisia's "hit points" gauge.

Press A on Controller 2, then hold Left on Controller 1 while pressing B on Controller 2—Increase Alisia's Thunder Magic by one level.

Press A on Controller 2, then hold Right on Controller 1 while pressing B on Controller 2—Increase the magic level of your current monster compan-

ion, and increase its hit points.

Press A on Controller 2, then hold B on Controller 1 while pressing B on Controller 2—The Thunder Magic becomes more powerful, killing most enemies with a single blast.

Press C on Controller 2—Skip the current stage.

Press C on Controller 2, then hold C on Controller 2—Warp to Stage 1.

Press C on Controller 2, then hold B on Controller 2—Warp to Stage 2.

Press C on Controller 2, then hold B and C on Controller 2—Warp to Stage 3.

Press C on Controller 2, then hold A on Controller 2—Warp to Stage 4.

Press C on Controller 2, then hold A and C on Controller 2—Warp to Stage 5.

Press C on Controller 2, then hold A and B on Controller 2—Warp to Stage 6.

Press C on Controller 2, then hold A, B and C on Controller 2—Warp to Stage 7.

Press C on Controller 2, then hold START on Controller 2—Warp to Stage 8.



Press and hold A...



Release A, hold B...



Release B, hold C...



Release C, press START.



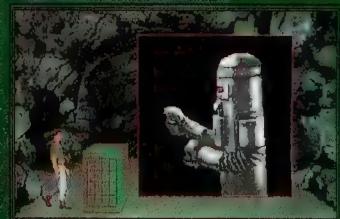
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ourney back in time to the year 1957 on an expedition to the dark heart of the Amazon Basin. A desperate, crazed message sends you on a perilous search through a land where legends come to life, danger hides behind every corner, and incredible treasures wait to be discovered.

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GAME GENIE CODES

Magic Sword

(CAPCOM FOR THE SUPER NES)



For use with Galoob's Super NES-compatible Game Genie Video Game Enhancer

C2BC-D7A5+C280-D7DD—No energy loss on collision with enemies

C2B4-6FD9—No energy loss when magic is used



GAME GENIE CODES

Wacky Races

(ATLUS FOR THE NES)



For use with Galoob's NES-compatible Game Genie Video Game Enhancer

GXSGSVVK—Don't take most damage

ENKTEIEXT—Start at Race 3, end of Stage 4

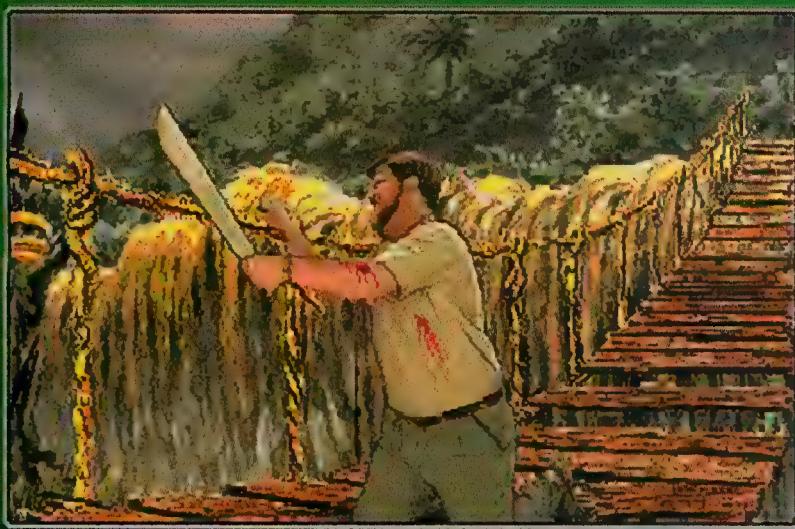
Crystal Mines II

(ATARI FOR THE LYNX)



Hey, who needs to take up a whole page with *Crystal Mines II* passwords? We've got a single code that will allow you to access *all* of the game's levels, including the bonus stages! The only one of the game's areas that this code doesn't give away is the ZERO level ("Secret Vault"), which we told you about way back in our July 1992 issue.

Here's how it works: Enter the password KIMI, but don't press the A button to start the game. Instead, hold down the **OPTION 1** and **OPTION 2** buttons and press B. You'll hear a sound like a machine gun and you'll see the first level ("Down in the Dirt") appear on the screen. Press A to skip ahead to the next level or press B to move back through the list. When you see the level you want to play, press any direction on the control pad to start the game!



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*Actual Amazon VGA screens
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VIDEO

Flashback

U.S. GOLD

For the Sega Genesis

AVAILABLE: FEBRUARY

Developed by Delphine Software—of *Out of This World* fame—this 12-megabit sci-fi adventure boasts six levels of shooting action and challenging decision-making. Intercut with polygon-based animated intermissions, it tells the tale of an intelligence agent named Conrad who creates a sophisticated pair of glasses that can analyze the molecular density of objects and living beings.

Things take a turn for the worse when Conrad's special spectacles reveal that certain high-ranking officials are actually extraterrestrial creatures who have infiltrated our society with the intention of dominating Earth. Kidnapped and brain-washed by the aliens, Conrad must blast his way out of an artificial jungle and continue on a long and treacherous journey to regain his memory.



Slowly, the rays from the regenerator re-implant the memories in Conrad's brain.



Street Combat

IREM

For the Super NES

AVAILABLE: FEBRUARY

A fairly obvious *Street Fighter II* clone, *Street Combat* steers clear of the more realistic approach of *Mortal Kombat* and other recent *SFII* takeoffs. This one features a more cartoonish feel, with colorful characters that range from Helmut (an armored robot) to Dozo (a killer clown).

With secret attack moves and layered backgrounds, this one's a straightforward fighting game for one or two players. Look for a full range of cryptic, digitized grunts and groans, as well as a series of truly bizarre bonus stages.



PREVIEWS

FIRST LOOK

BY CHRIS BIENIEK

Bonk 3: Bonk's Big Adventure

TTI

For the TurboGrafx-16/Turbo Duo

AVAILABLE: APRIL

Though the title of the new Bonk game is still tentative, you can expect this upcoming TurboChip to deliver all of the best features of *Bonk's Adventure* and *Bonk's Revenge*, plus new power-ups that can blow our hero up to supersize or shrink him down to shrimp scale. *Bonk 3* will also include a two-player option for simultaneous head-butting action.



Dungeon Explorer II

TTI

For the

TurboGrafx-16/Turbo Duo

AVAILABLE: MARCH

A sequel to the popular TurboChip game, this five-player adventure combines role-playing, puzzle and exploration elements with *Gauntlet*-style fighting action. *Dungeon Explorer II* uses the extra memory capacity of the new Super CD System Card to deliver a more complex world, a much larger variety of characters (including robots that can join your party) and lengthy animation scenes.



Zen Intergalactic Ninja

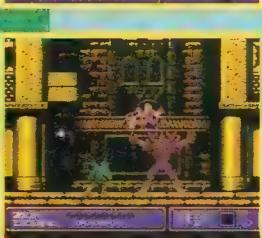
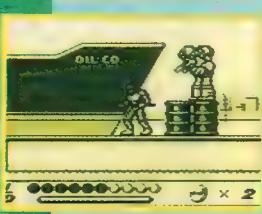
KONAMI

For the NES and Game Boy

AVAILABLE: FIRST QUARTER '93

Out of the pages of the comic book created by Steve Stern and Dan Cote, it's *Zen Intergalactic Ninja*, an "environmental mercenary" from another planet equipped with the martial arts skills of the future. In this punch-and-kick side scroller, Zen joins forces with the Recycled Heroes to rescue the Earth-born "Starchilde" Jeremy from the clutches of the putrid Lord Contaminous, a vile creature who emerged from a toxic waste dump and set out to "trash the biosphere."

In addition to the *Ninja Gaiden*-style fighting action, both versions feature special levels with different play mechanics; for example, there's a shooting gallery level in the Game Boy version that's as unique as the Zaxxon-influenced diagonal-scroll stages that appear in the NES version. Both are one-player games, due in late February or March.



Cool World

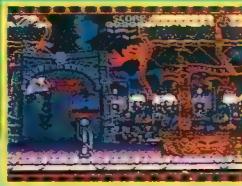
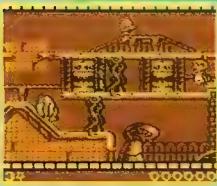
OCEAN

For the Super NES and Game Boy

AVAILABLE: JANUARY

Based on last summer's animated feature film from Ralph Bakshi, this surreal adventure puts you in the shoes of Jack, a cartoon illustrator who slips between the cracks of reality to become a character in the comic-book world he created.

Featuring Hollie, Sparks, Vegas Vinnie and other "doodles" from the movie, *Cool World* should also be available for the NES by the time you read this.



Lethal Weapon

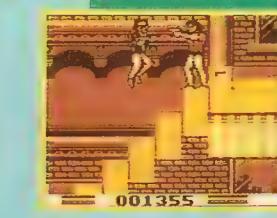
OCEAN

For the NES and Game Boy

AVAILABLE: NOW

Licensed from the successful movie series starring Mel Gibson and Danny Glover (and Joe Pesci), this side-scrolling action title follows on the heels of the Super NES version released in December.

Set in the streets of Los Angeles, it's a run-and-jump crime-fighting game with tricky obstacles and thugs and thieves at every single turn.

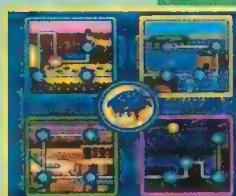


Congo's Caper

DATA EAST

For the Super NES

AVAILABLE: MARCH



If you thought Data East's *Joe and Mac* was the last word in cartoon cavemen on the Super NES, think again. *Congo's Caper* goes even further into the "cute" category, flaunting brighter colors and rounder characters with bigger eyes. Congo, as it happens, is a little monkey who has been turned into a semihuman caveman—but his tail gives away his simian roots.

Aside from jumping around, hanging from vines and swinging a club, our hero occasionally spots a helpless creature being clubbed by a cruel cavewoman. Rescue the creature, and you may be whisked away to a special bonus area.

Malibu Bikini Volleyball

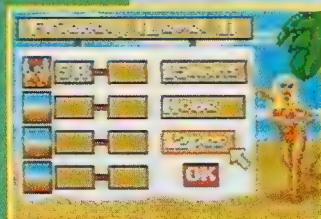
ATARI

For the Atari Lynx

AVAILABLE: MARCH

Developed by the U.K.'s Hand Made Software (Awesome Golf, Dracula—The Undead), this new Lynx sports title isn't as lightweight as its title would suggest. Sure, some of the players wear bikinis, but that's no reason to underestimate the skills of your opponents on the other side of the net.

The games take place in several different locations with adjustable difficulty levels and the ability to "Lynx up" with as many as four players. One of *Malibu Bikini Volleyball*'s more unique features involves the music; you can call up a control panel that looks like a full-featured CD player to choose background tunes.



Spot—The Cool Adventure

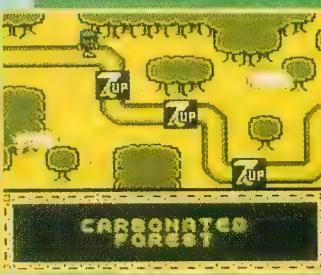
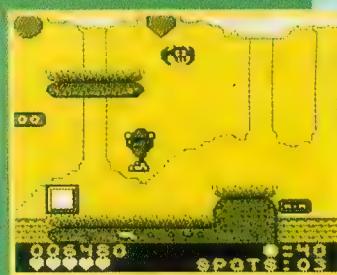
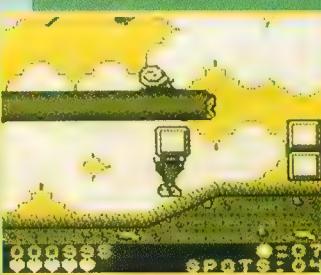
VIRGIN

For the Nintendo Game Boy

AVAILABLE: FIRST QUARTER '93

An interesting license that has managed to thrive as a video game in various formats, *Spot* (the 7-Up mascot) is hitting the Game Boy in a scrolling *Super Mario*-style adventure, courtesy of the busy Virgin Games.

Aside from a standard run-and-jump play mechanic, certain sections of the game allow *Spot* to fly through the air or control the placement of tracks and platforms to stand on. Look for a special bonus level as well.



Exile 2

WORKING DESIGNS

For the TurboGrafx-16/Turbo Duo

AVAILABLE: APRIL



Just hitting the shelves in Japan, this highly anticipated sequel is currently being translated for American release. A hybrid action/adventure game like its predecessor, *Exile 2* features the return of Sadler, Fakhyle, Kindi and other characters from the original. One improvement allows you to choose which character you want to control—you can switch characters anytime you're in a dungeon.

Alternating between overhead-view exploration scenes and side-view action sequences, *Exile 2* also takes advantage of the expanded Super CD memory to deliver longer, more frequent "animé" sequences than the first game.

TEST YOUR ELECTRONIC ARTS AQ (EA ATTITUDE QUOTIENT):

R U A GENESIS GENIUS?

PART

4

What's your Electronic Arts AQ (Attitude Quotient)? Take this quiz* and see if you have what it takes. Write the answers to all seven questions on your completed entry form and send it in. If you have a high AQ you could win 3 Genesis titles from Electronic Arts.

*Missed the first three quizzes? No sweat. It only takes one quiz to test your AQ.

QUESTION #2

Q: IN NHLPA®
HOCKEY '93,
A ZAMBONI™ IS:

- A. A naked fan streaking across the ice.
- B. When the puck gets stuck in the goalie's jock.
- C. The grunt you hear when a stick hits something other than the puck.
- D. When the line to the ladies room wraps three times.
- E. The machine that grooms the ice between periods.



QUESTION #3

Q: IN LHX ATTACK
CHOPPER™,
THE HELICOPTER IS SO
TOP SECRET THAT:

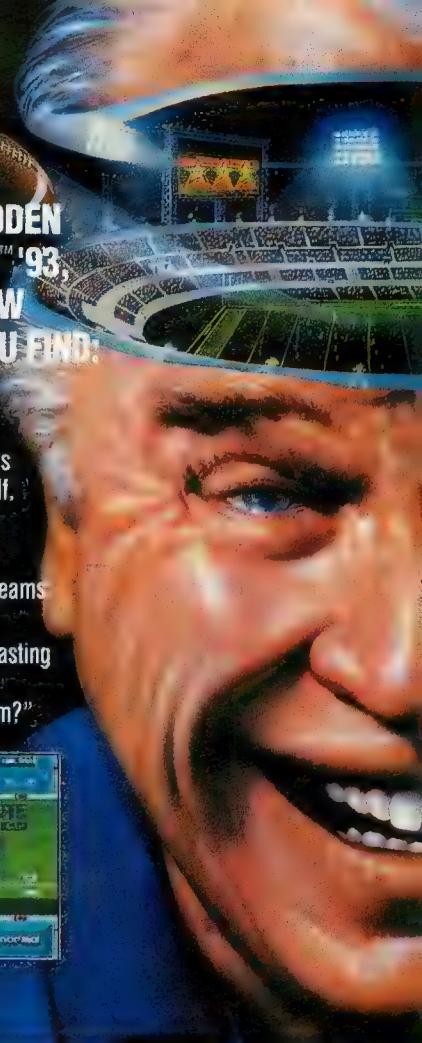
- A. Pilots have to fly blindfolded.
- B. No one has ever seen one in operation.
- C. They can only fly at night or on Superbowl Sunday.
- D. They're made of glass so they don't even cast shadows.
- E. The guy that designed the rotor doesn't know what it goes to.



QUESTION #1

Q: IN
JOHN MADDEN
FOOTBALL '93,
WHICH NEW
FEATURE WON'T YOU FIND:

- A. The "No Huddle" Offense.
- B. 38 Pro Teams, including the eight greatest-ever teams as picked by Madden himself.
- C. Halftime show featuring Roseanne Barr-Arnold.
- D. Game stats for players and teams saved on battery back-up.
- E. Madden's digitized voice, blasting out comments like "Boom! Where'd that truck come from?"



QUESTION #4

Q: IN BULLS VS LAKERS AND THE NBA® PLAYOFFS™, THE EA SPORTS™ T-METER IS:

- A. A new device for making clutch free throws.
- B. A dipstick for the locker room tea service.
- C. Jersey size for players over seven feet tall.
- D. A unit to measure how far coaches throw chairs.
- E. A rap version of the Star Spangled Banner.



QUESTION #6

Q: IN LOTUS TURBO CHALLENGE™, THE OPERATIVE F-WORD IS:

- A. Flatulent.
- B. Frilly.
- C. Female.
- D. Fast.
- E. Foul.



QUESTION #5

Q: IN CRÜE BALL™, HEAVY METAL PINBALL, YOU CAN:

- A. Talk with a Liszt.
- B. Eat a bowl of Schubert.
- C. Smash a bust of Beethoven.
- D. Get a Handel on your life.
- E. Get off on Chopin veggies.



QUESTION #7

Q: IN ROAD RASH™ II, WHICH WEAPONS CAN YOU CARRY:

- A. Clubs and chains.
- B. An accordian and a license to use it.
- C. A boom box playing Barry Manilow's Greatest Hits.
- D. A bag of chili pepper suppositories.
- E. A dead white poodle named Fifi.



THINK YOU HAVE A HIGH AQ? PROVE IT! WIN BIG WITH ELECTRONIC ARTS.

SEND IN YOUR ANSWERS AND SEE THE ENTRY FORM
BELOW TO FIND OUT WHAT YOU COULD WIN.

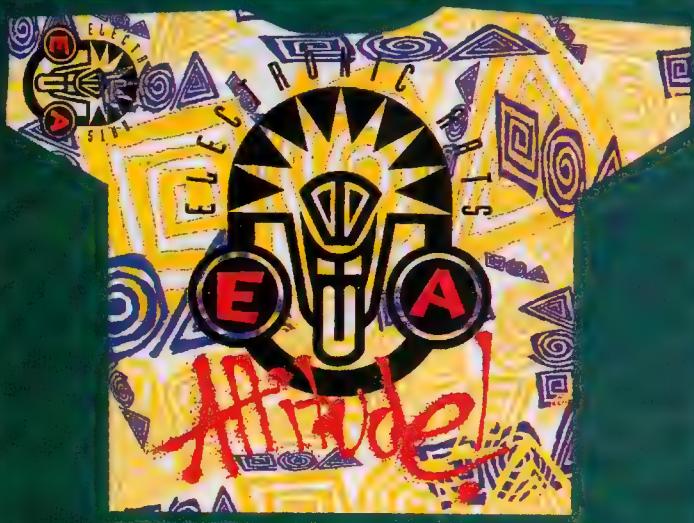
ANSWERS TO PART 2:
#1 D C A T B A H E #2 D D D B

ANSWERS TO THE TRIO BOX FROM PART 3:
#1 Yester #2 The Flint Fila Win the Cup #3 Kung Fu #4 Incredible Egg

WATCH FOR QUIZ PART 5

IN THE Answers to Quiz Part 4

FAST FINISHER BONUS



Wear it on your sleeve! Free Electronic Arts "EA Attitude" T-shirts to the first 50 entrants who send in completed entries. Earliest postmark wins.

CIRCLE #119 ON READER SERVICE CARD.

PROVE YOU HAVE A HIGH AQ:

Just fill out this form and mail it to us. All completed entries qualify for a drawing to win any 3 Genesis games from Electronic Arts, including these hot soon-to-be-released titles:

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Coming soon from EA SPORTS. Play a full season, compile player stats, and even choose your dream team from all the players of the big leagues. The most realistic baseball game to hit 16-bit!

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A new threat has emerged from the jungles of South America, and now it's time to win the war on drugs. Use new vehicles and weapons to battle an evil Drug Lord in 9 new explosive campaigns.

JAMES POND™ III

Pond is back, and wetter than ever! This time he's got the help of a springy new sidekick, Furrel Frog. Control fish or frog in this new exciting adventure in the James Pond series.

Your Answers

#1 #2 #3 #4 #5 #6 #7

Name

Address

Apt.

City

State

Zip

Daytime Phone

Birthdate (month/day/year)

Send completed Quiz to:
AQ QUIZ PART 4, Electronic Arts, 1450 Fashion Island Blvd. San Mateo, CA 94404
(Entry must be postmarked by 3/31/93, drawing will be held 4/16/93.
Winner will be contacted by mail.)

I would like to be a Genesis game advisor to Electronic Arts. Give me a call sometime.
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They're all captured in *NHLPA® '93*. The official game of the National Hockey League Player's Association. The all-new version of the most action-packed hockey game ever.

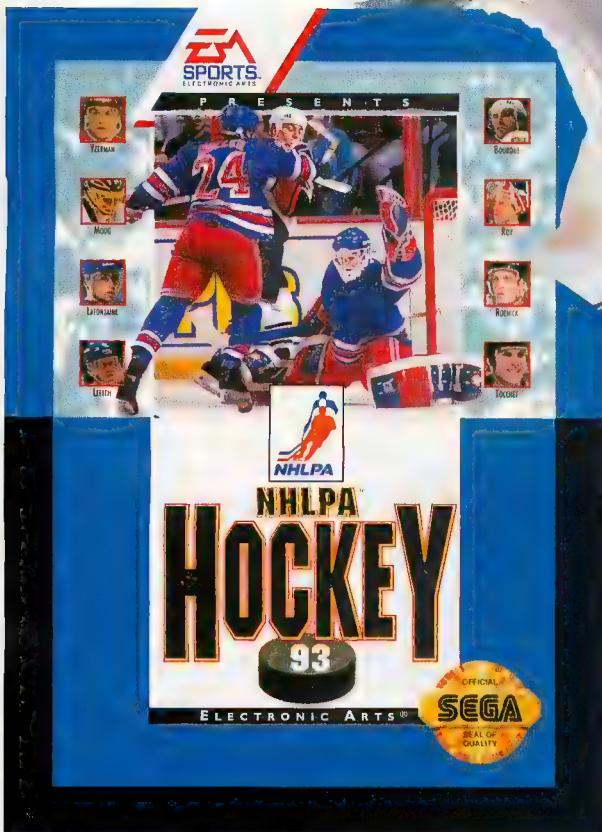
Last year, *NHL® Hockey* was the top-selling *Genesis™* sports title. This year, the same game designers deliver even more explosive game play. Check out all the players. The complete, accurate team rosters from the 1992 season. Plus 1993's new Ottawa and Tampa Bay expansion rosters.

NHLPA '93 is the finest the sport has to offer. With more new pro moves than you can shake a stick at.

Faster, tougher to beat goalies who leave the crease to clear loose pucks, or lunge and dive to smoother shots. Individualized moves, like glass-breaking slap shots, nimble stick action, and brutal body checks. Each player skating his own unique game.

Hot new defensive techniques and an improved computer opponent raise the electricity in power play situations.

Supra
COM



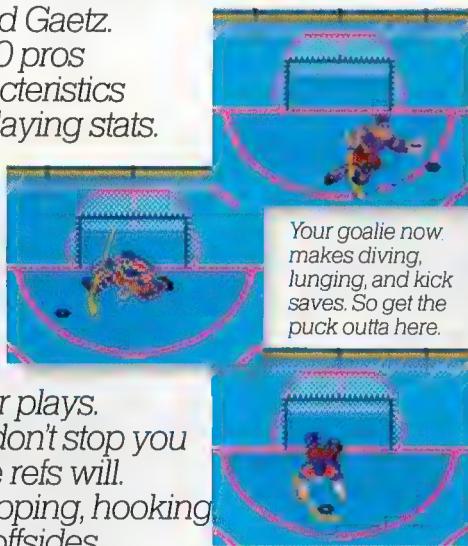
Standing between you and the trophy are scorers like Larmer. Goalies like Belfour. Intimidators like Probert and Gaetz.

Each of the 550 pros rated on 14 characteristics based on 1992 playing stats.

Some of the pros are better defensemen, others scoring machines, others are specialists at killing off opponents' power plays.

If these guys don't stop you in your tracks, the refs will. Calling you for tripping, hooking, cross-checking, offsides,

high sticking, or icing. The more severe the penalty, the longer you're in the sin bin. There are even injuries that can knock you out for the game.



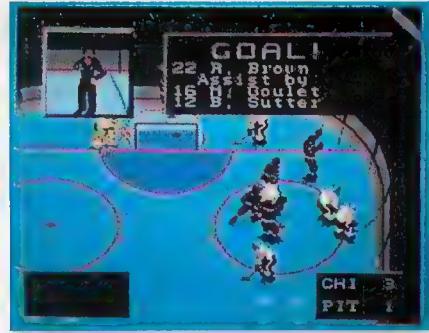
Your goalie now makes diving, lunging, and kick saves. So get the puck outta here.



Talk about a game with impact. Personalized moves include Doug Wilson's cannon-like slap shot.



EA SPORTS' Ron Barr is all over the ice like a Zamboni.TM



Score with the names of the game. NHLPA '93 is the only place you'll find all 550 pros.

For the first time ever, battery back-up lets you make the greatest saves outside of your goalie. Save lines you create. Even player stats for the entire post-season tournament.

The coverage of EATM SPORTS lets nothing slide. Spectacular camera angles. Sportscaster Ron Barr. The exclusive crowd Noise-O-Meter.TM Highlights from other playoff games. Instant replay. Commentary.

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EA SPORTS HINTS HOTLINE

PRO SET

95 cents for first minute.
75 cents for each additional minute.

MUCH ADO ABOUT



THE REAL STORY

BY ANDY EDDY

The number of significant computer-related creations cooked up in the Silicon Valley is countless. This area south of San Francisco is home to such industry powerhouses as Apple, Electronic Arts, Sun Microsystems and many other household names—at least with regard to computer professionals.

Add to that list the name 3DO.

While it may not be a force as you read this, 3DO (pronounced "three-dee-oh," like "audio" and "video") is getting ready to be a name you'll remember, with a cutting-edge concept and lofty plans. Though it's easy to say that the company's intentions may be *too* much to ask for, when you see the established companies behind the 3DO name, it suddenly comes together.

THE SUM OF ITS PARTS

Trip Hawkins is someone few gamers would know if he crossed their path in a mall, but his influence on electronic gaming is, to say the least, significant. A little more than ten years ago, he left a comfortable position as director of marketing at a computer company called Apple to start on a software vision. This new group of "electronic artists" would emphasize the programmers' accomplishments. Electronic Arts took a new tack, putting software in record albumlike sleeves and giving the people who created the software top billing. A decade later, EA is still one of the major forces in electronic entertainment, releasing million-sellers on disk and cartridge with regularity.



Hawkins, however, was not content to sit back on EA's successes. A few years ago, he spun off from EA to start SMSG (San Mateo Software Group) with major backing from a seemingly odd collection of companies—though the connection becomes apparent as the plans of Hawkins' brainstorm unroll.

Put Electronic Arts, Time Warner, Kleiner Perkins and Matsushita Electric together and what have you got? You have a wealth of financial resources to work with, but each company also brings to 3DO (SMSG's new name as of mid-1992) certain aspects in the plan:

- Kleiner Perkins is one of the primary venture-capital firms for the Silicon Valley, a company whose business it is to fund innovation and progress. Kleiner Perkins has put its money behind such companies as Spectrum HoloByte, Compaq and Sun Microsystems.
- Time Warner is the result of a recent merger between Time Inc. and Warner, which has created a bank of media-related sources in books, movies, magazines and other entertainment. Primary among those holdings are cable

channels HBO and Cinemax, and Time Warner Cable, the latter being the second-biggest cable system operator in the country.

- Electronic Arts, of course, brings its expertise and current market-share leadership in electronic entertainment to the table.

- Finally, the previously "silent" partner is Matsushita, which controls such brand names as Quasar, Technics and Panasonic, but also invented the VHS videotape format and owns MCA, who invented the laser disc and whose Universal Studios is one of the studio giants in Hollywood.

So, we know the participants, but what exactly is "the plan"? Hawkins' vision is to create a new standard format for consumer electronics, much like VHS is to videotape, which will be the future of interactive media. It's more than video games, branching off into such aspects as education, edutainment, simulations, security/control, video editing and interactive stories and sports; these are what Hawkins terms "interactive pictures." But as 3DO develops, the "network" capabilities are what will make its impact on families apparent. Such features as 1,000-plus channels, on-demand movies (bringing the video-rental outlet to your home), simulcasting, home shopping and banking, information services and even VCR programming will be just a few of the applications. Imagine, to use one of Hawkins' examples, you are watching a TV show and a character comes on that you aren't familiar with. You could click on that character and get an update on who he is and how he came to be in the show. From there, a click on a menu

could bring you a full-motion segment from the show where this character was introduced.

BUT WHERE'S THE FUN?

All this is really *keen*, but how does this work for the gamer? This fall, Panasonic will have the first U.S. hardware release, tentatively called the "3DO Interactive Multiplayer." The system will be a CD-based system, much like Philips' CD-I and Commodore's CDTV, and it will feature a quantum leap over existing video-game systems (see accompanying sidebar *Under the Hood* for more technical info). For example, Figure 1 shows the comparison between television, the "average" game console and 3DO's specs:

Hawkins calls 3DO an "improvement by a factor of 50." This power

FIGURE 1

	TV	Game System	3DO
Max. colors	2,000,000	256	16,000,000
Pixels per sec. change	6,000,000	1,000,000	36,000,000-64,000,000

results in smoother images, cleaner scaling and rotation (take that, Mode-7 fans!), texture mapping abilities (the process of "wrapping" an image over a computer-generated shape), more involved games and cinematic software effects. In fact, one person who recently saw the 3DO demo was Steven Spielberg, who called it a breakthrough of breakthroughs. One of the first 3DO releases will be an interactive version of *Jurassic Park*, Spielberg's next film, based on Michael Crichton's book of the same name, a dinosaur-related thriller.

The faith in 3DO is evident when you see the attendance—paid attendance, that is—for 3DO's initial developers' conference, recently held in northern California in November. A total of 471 people attended, with 47 of them signing up as actual licensees (see the sidebar of 3DO licensees for the current list). The stunning fact, though, is what the makeup of the 471 people from 200 companies was: Software producers like

Virgin and Spectrum HoloByte were naturals due to their desire to stay abreast of new platforms on which to release their products. But Hawkins said that major movie studios also were in attendance, showing that, as Hawkins noted, this was the first time that Hollywood and Silicon Valley players put their heads together to this extent.

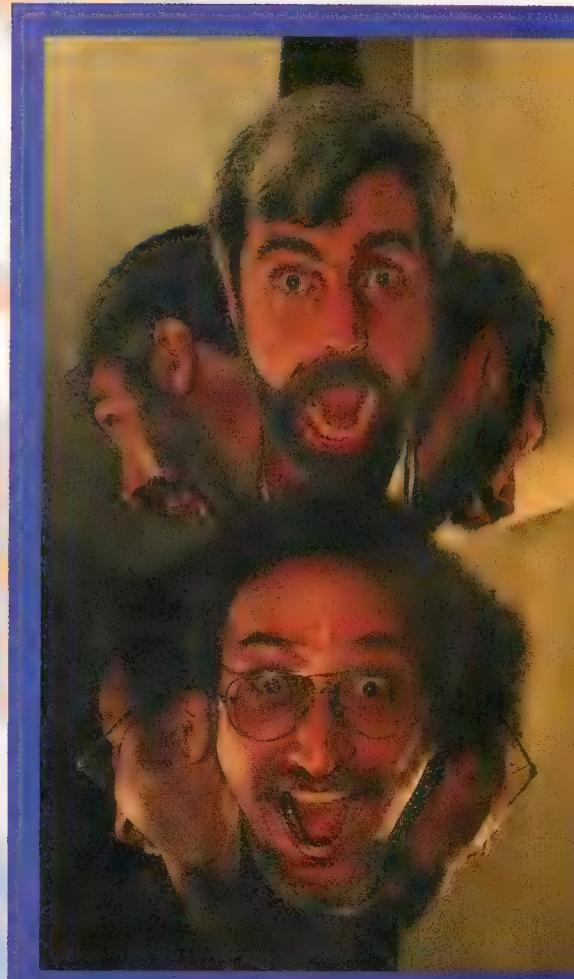
3DO's plan for getting companies involved should also be a benefit to gamers. As Hawkins comes from a marketing background, he has strong thoughts on how to get 3DO's creations out to the masses:

First, there will be no license fees or royalties charged to those who produce hardware—and, in fact, 3DO will *pay* companies on a per-unit basis for the first three years. This will give hardware producers an incentive to create and market 3DO-based hardware.

Second, software will be less expensive from a licensing standpoint. Currently, a license fee of about \$8 to \$10 per cartridge goes from a licensee to Nintendo for the "privilege" of selling the cart. Contrary to that, 3DO will only charge a maximum of \$3 per unit, and that number can be reduced further by hitting certain milestones. In addition to the economical CD medium (versus the more costly floppy and cart formats), this should ensure that the software costs are lower to the consumer.

Finally, 3DO won't market and produce software itself, taking it out of competition with its licensees. This backs up Hawkins' words that "3DO will be a catalyst, not a monopoly." To benefit the software developers further, 3DO is utilizing standard Macintosh development tools to create software, a system many already have and use. Also, 3DO will offer developers a "content library" that programmers can freely use and modify.

To add to the economy, 3DO is employing an on-the-fly compression technique to store the data on CD. This process allows what would



Co-designers of 3DO's advanced technology, R.J. Mical (top) and Dave Needle share a relaxed moment.

normally take six to eight megabytes in CD space to take up only two megabytes. The compression stays in place as the data runs (the system uses a CD player that runs at twice the normal speed), so the process remains efficient throughout.

SCRATCHING THE SURFACE

What you see on these pages is the first peek at what 3DO is all about, and it only touches on what this company's impact might be. 3DO's public introduction was set for a January 7, 1993, press conference, the first day of the Winter Consumer Electronics Show. You can bet that the flow of information from that point will be steady and strong. Make your own judgments as to whether or not you want to get onboard, and look to VG&CE for more on 3DO in future issues.

Continued on next page

3DO's quantum leap required some sharp minds, and the people behind the design of 3DO's hardware were both careful and knowledgeable as to what it would take to make this leap of technology happen. 3DO brought in people who had a hand in the fates of such companies as Apple and EA, and the development of such products as the Amiga computer and Atari Lynx handheld. In fact, the trio of Dave Morse, Dave Needle and R.J. Mical—the primary designers of 3DO's hardware—have created a sister company to 3DO that will share in its profits.

Here's a look at what makes up 3DO's hardware platform:

- A 32-bit RISC (Reduced Instruction Set Chip) CPU is the system's processor. It's one of the fastest processors because of its simple instruction set, so software can be executed faster.
- A custom graphics/animation processor (which 3DO refers to as the "true brain" of the system) and custom sound processor takes the weight of these functions off the main processor. The chips also allow for more elaborate animation and sound effects.
- A multitasking operating system gives 3DO the freedom of doing multiple chores at once. For example, you'll be able to watch a TV show in one "window" and play a game in another, with no slowdown effects to either.

As noted previously, the 3DO system will use the Macintosh development system, so programmers and users alike will benefit. But it doesn't end there, as 3DO will offer compatibility with and ports for MIDI (Musical Instrument Digital Interface), standard audio, Photo CD, video and various peripherals. The add-on peripherals were designed to be daisy-chainable, so you could have multiple devices hooked up, such as a keyboard, a mouse, stereoscopic glasses and a number of control pads all tied in at the same time. Lastly, a slot will be in place to allow the addition of optional interfaces on cartridge.

The plan is for Matsushita/Panasonic's first offering to be released sometime in the fall of 1993 at a price of \$700, dropping down to \$500 or lower thereafter.

SNEAK PEEK

I arrived at 3DO's San Mateo offices for what I expected would be a demo of "just another game system." I left with the feeling I'd seen a crystal ball into the future. It's a big job to pull off, but it could change how we get information and entertainment. And with cable TV and telephone gradually changing over to digital transmission (see *Inside Gaming* in the September issue of *VG&CE* for one view on how this could affect interactive gaming), Trip Hawkins' visions could be reality in short order.

The day before Thanksgiving 1992, Hawkins, Janet Strauss (3DO's marketing director) and I sat down to discuss the company's plans for 3DO, immediate and future. They then put on a videotape of 3DO's performance—with the disclaimer that what I was about to see was about 25% of what actual performance would be. (This was due to the fact that the tape was made from a "wire-wrap" prototype of the hardware. In developing new hardware, companies create an easy-to-alter version using wire and full-scale circuitry to see if it will work properly. Usually, the yards of wire involved cause a

lot of friction, so this prototype runs slower than the final version will. When all the bugs are worked out in wire-wrap form, a "silicon" version is created using integrated circuits (IC) on chips to make the hardware run more efficiently and much smaller.)

First on the demo was an example of scaling and rotation: A small frame of a bird was spun on top of a full-frame view of a mountain range, then resized and spun simultaneously. After that, the bird image was distorted by having its corners pulled and twisted like a rubber sheet. Then, a series of pictures was made into a cube, still in front of the mountain range image, and rotated in the foreground, showing the 3-D capabilities of 3DO's hardware. Finally, the cube was turned from opaque to translucent (or what's called "half-bright" on some systems), letting the mountain range show through, but keeping the cube visible in foreground.

Following segments on the tape showed a bouncing ball (complete with gravitational and elastic effects) in a room bordered by other scaled images; a flyover of detailed terrain simulating



A FIRST LOOK AT 3DO

Yosemite's El Capitan; some quickly created character animations; and some stunning demos using "live" camcorder input.

The latter shows not only the full-motion video flexibility of 3DO's hardware, but also its capabilities as a video-editing station. First, an image of a girl was shown in a window by itself. Again, the smoothness of the video output was limited by the hardware prototype, but still demonstrated how powerful the system will be.

The following demos, using this video input, were equally wild. The screen was split into four quarters, all showing the same

camcorder image. Then, one by one, each quarter was manipulated differently: For instance, one screen was twisted, while another was turned translucent.

It's obvious that 3DO, as shown by this crude and quick demo, has created a system that rivals the abilities of large mainframes and minicomputers. The output of Silicon Graphic and Sun workstations, which can be seen in computer graphics and special effects in commercials and movies, will be rivaled by a much cheaper 3DO system. And this is just the beginning of what 3DO is working on. ■



also set in a "translucent" palette, giving a "glass" effect that lets the background show through the cube. Though it's impossible to adequately display in a magazine, each side could be a independent animation instead of a static image, and all without slowing down whatever else was taking place.

Left: A basic image of the 3DO logo "on stage" is scaled, placed in a wooden frame and slightly rotated over an opaque background.

Far left and above: The same basic image is copied to six separate animation cells, then mapped onto the sides of a three-dimensional cube and placed on top of a background image. The cube is

LIST OF 3DO LICENSEES

(AS OF DECEMBER 1, 1992)

American Laser Games (ICAT)
Argonaut
B.I.T.S.
Bullfrog Productions Ltd.
Cineplay Dynamics Inc.
Crystal Dynamics Inc.
DMA Design
Dynamix
Dream Parc Technologies
The Edge Interactive Media Inc.
Electronic Arts
Equilibrium
Fathom Pictures
Flying Cat Inc.
Fun Project
Gray Matter
Gremlin Graphics
Haukom Associates
Hand Made Software Ltd.
Intellimedia Sports Inc.
Interactive Support Group Inc.
Interplay Productions
Interworks
Iotek Interactive Technology and Entertainment
Jupiter Distribution Inc.
Malibu Interactive
Mammoth Micro Productions
Maxis Inc.
MicroCabin
MCA Inc.
Millennium Interactive Ltd.
Ocean Software Ltd.
Paramount
Park Place Productions
Psygnosis
Realtime Associates
Red Dot Software
Renegade Software
Riverhill Soft Inc.
Burt Sloane
Spectrum HoloByte
Spindrift Designs
Total Vision
Virgin Games Inc.
Viridis Corporation
Warner Brothers
Westwood Studios Inc.

3DO expects to announce more signed licensees by the time the January 7, 1993, press conference takes place. We'll have 3DO updates in future issues of VG&CE as we get confirmed information. ■



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Head-butts,

*An interview with Scott Steinberg,
product manager of Streets of Rage 2™ for Sega™ Genesis.™*

kidney punches,

How is Streets of Rage 2 different from the first one?

The graphics are awesome. At 16 megs it's our biggest game. Overall there's a lot more of everything; more moves, more intricate maneuvers, more characters. And the characters are a lot bigger in size. So the action is more impactful.

uppercuts, knee-slams,

What are some of the new moves?

Axel™ has new punch combinations that do some serious damage. Blaze™ can do backflips to attack enemies in front and behind her. And there are two new players. Max™ and Skate.™ Max is an ex-wrestler with a ruthless body-slam, and Skate knocks his opponents out with flying jump kicks. He can also skate behind his opponents, jump on their shoulders and ambush them.

eye-gouges

Are there new enemies?

Lots of new enemies—a gang of motorcycle thugs, a guy with a jet-powered pack on his back, knife-fighters, ax-murderers, ex-cons, and a bunch of new martial arts experts, so there are a lot of new challenges. And the player control is different also.

and groin kicks.

How is the control different?

We've tuned the control to be much more responsive, so that the action will be a lot faster and more spontaneous. You can crack a jaw or flatten an opponent in a split second. The players are basically as fast as your reflexes will let them be. The fighting is so realistic, you actually feel tired after playing it. It's the next best thing to kicking some real you-know-what.

(Just another typical day at the Sega office.)



VIDEO GAME REVIEWS

The Magical Quest
Starring Mickey Mouse

CAPCOM

For the Super NES (N/A)

SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Castle of Illusion for the Genesis set all sorts of excellence standards, owing to the Disney-quality graphics and the simple, infectious and imaginative game play. Somehow, though, that indefinable spark of stylistic brilliance was missing in the follow-ups *Fantasia* and *Quackshot*. We were beginning to wonder if the magical collaboration between Disney and the 16-bitters was a one-shot deal, never to be duplicated.

But along comes *The Magical Quest* (*TMQ*) and, presto-chango, the magic is back, this time on the SNES. *The Magical Quest* is every bit as enchanting and enjoyable as *Castle*. There are some trade-offs, but, for every area where *TMQ* doesn't quite meet *Castle*, there's another area where *TMQ* outshines it.

What tugs at the ol' heartstrings even more than a kidnapped girlfriend? Easy: a kidnapped doggy. Yes, poor Pluto is whisked away

by Emperor Pete to his far-off castle. (If Disney had collaborated with National Lampoon, they could've called the cart *Buy This Game or We'll Shoot This Dog*.) Mickey's got six levels of arduous acrobatics separating him from his encounter with Pete: haunted forests, mountains, fiery pits, icy slopes, underwater caverns and, naturally, the castle itself.

As in *Castle*, this is the old '40s Mickey, before he got fashion-conscious: red pants, yellow shoes, oversize white gloves. But along the way, he'll find three additional costumes (the "changing" sequence is a hoot, as Mickey pulls a curtain in front of himself and tosses clothes over the top). Each costume carries its own "power": In his fireman costume, our Main Mouse can squirt water; in his wizard's cloak, he can throw magical bolts; and, as a mountaineer, he can wield a grappling hook. Some levels

require you to change costumes frequently; others, hardly at all.

TMQ is arguably tougher than *Castle*. *Castle* had very few secret items or loca-

tions; *TMQ* has a lot of hidden bonuses, doorways and stores (where you can spend coins you find throughout the game). This gives *TMQ* some decent replay value. It has subbosses and some mildly tricky puzzles and obstacles. It does not have a practice level for the kiddies, the way *Castle* did. But, to balance all this out, *TMQ* has unlimited continues (that drop you at any of the numerous sublevel points). Persistent players could probably finish *TMQ* in two to three hours on easy difficulty. But don't play it that way; go for difficult or, at least, normal. Avoid the temptation. Use your self-discipline! *What are you, a man or a mouse??!!*

The backgrounds and animation are simply beautiful. Multiple layers are used in most levels for a pseudo-3-D effect. The vivid background paintings, which scroll in every conceivable direction, contain numerous details that make you want to stop





and just take in the scenery; I was blown away by the aurora borealis that shimmers in and out of existence on the icy mountaintops near Pete's Castle. Mickey and the other characters exhibit a terrific range of expressions (Mickey reacts differently depending on which costume he's wearing). The boss encounters make great use of the SNES's scaling and rotation capabilities; one boss, for instance, starts as a tiny black dot on the horizon and zooms forward to fill the entire screen, the beat of his immense wings blowing poor Mickey

from a mountaintop like a dust bunny. It's one of the most dramatic entrances in all of video gamedom!

Curiously, though, charming graphic touches from the earlier Disney games are missing in *TMQ*: Mickey

though I would have liked to hear some of the characters' "real" voices.

You may want to keep *TMQ* in your cart collection despite its easiness. The whole package is such a good showpiece, such a good example of how visually compelling, nonviolent and enjoyable a video game can be, that you'll want it around for an occasional replay and to show it off to your family and your Genesis-playing friends who think they've got a lock on superior Mickey games!

—Josh Mandel

Capcom USA
3303 Scott Blvd.
Santa Clara, CA 95054
(408) 727-0400

EDITORS' CORNER

AE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
CB	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
DM	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
MD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Dave held a lower opinion of *Magical Quest*, calling it "pretty, but uninspired." However, everyone else felt it was a solid game, though a bit on the easy side.

Mega Man 5

CAPCOM

For the Nintendo Entertainment System (N/A)

SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

If you're not familiar with *Mega Man* by now, you're probably not an NES owner. This is now the longest-running series of video games to appear in this country, and it's particularly noteworthy because it hasn't "jumped ship" to continue on a 16-bit game machine (like *Phantasy Star*, *Castlevania* and *Super Mario Bros.* have done). A third Game Boy adventure is about to appear, but Capcom has been wise enough to keep the numbering systems different.

A challenging run-and-jump game on a par with the first four games, *Mega Man 5* features the return of *Mega Man*'s dog Rush (first seen in the third installment) as well as Dr. Cossack, the "big boss" of *Mega Man 4*, who



has apparently had a change of heart and joined forces with *Mega Man*'s friend and creator, Dr. Light. (Hmmm...didn't the same thing happen to the villainous Dr. Wily after he was defeated at the end of *Mega Man 2*?) Anyway, Dr. Light has been kidnapped by Protoman—a prototype *Mega Man* gone bad—and our hero must face eight new bosses and fight through the evil robot's lair to rescue the good doctor.

As convoluted as it all sounds, you don't need a scorecard to figure out who your enemies are in any of the *Mega Man* games; you run, you jump, you shoot at everything you see. The hallmark of the series to date has been the excellence of its audiovisual effects, and, of course, the graphics and sounds in this new installment are of equal quality.

Curiously, Capcom has never made any attempt to refine the main character or change his appearance in any way—which is testament to the excellence of the first *Mega Man* adventure. (Released here in 1989, the original game received very little initial attention and is now considered a collector's item in some circles.) Lots of bright colors and throbbing tunes carry you from one stage to the next, and the play control is typically superb.

So what's different about *Mega Man 5*? Well, there are some interesting scenarios: low gravity for super-high jumping in the Star Man stage, a wild ride on a jet-powered boat in the Wave Man stage and hilariously confusing upside-down action in the domain of Gravity Man. Again, the game is typically long and full of action, but it isn't significantly better than the first four video games—it's just another excellent *Mega Man* game.



You know what I'd *really* like to see? As a "last hurrah" for the dying NES, wouldn't it be great if Capcom put together a limited-edition boxed set of *Mega Man 1* through *5*, complete with a thoroughly researched booklet explaining the character's history and development? How about throwing in a couple of extras—say, collector pins or trading cards that depict each of the 40-odd boss characters that have faced *Mega Man* over the years? Bring it out at a reasonable price, and man, it'd be the *ultimate* gift for the NES owner—a piece of history, a veritable family heirloom. Hey, I can dream, can't I?

—Chris Bieniek

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EDITORS' CORNER

AE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
CB	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
DM	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
MD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Dave called it "nicely done, but difficult," and Andy said it was "another classic-to-be." Mike and Chris both felt it showed little improvement over previous efforts.

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CIRCLE #122 ON READER SERVICE CARD.

Roger Clemens' MVP Baseball

ACCLAIM

For the Sega Genesis (\$49.95)

SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Reviewing can be tricky sometimes. (No, really.) You don't want to judge a game simply by comparing it to others and saying, "It's better than this, but worse than this." At the same time, you *have* to compare it to similar games that set the standard for graphics and game play. Such is my dilemma with *Roger Clemens' MVP Baseball*. It's a decent game on its own merits (with one *big* flaw, but more on that later), but, compared to other Genesis baseball games, it simply doesn't make the grade.

MVP Baseball supplies you with 26 fictional teams (with typically goofy names like the Oakland Cobras and Houston Mustangs) in two divisions and four subdivisions. The National Division has 12 teams, while the American Division has 14, and the American Division teams use the designated hitter rule.

There are two modes of play: exhibition game (for one or two players) and regular season (for one player only). The regular season is 33 games long in the National Division, 39 games in the American. Win your division, and you make the playoffs; win the playoffs, and you're the world champion.

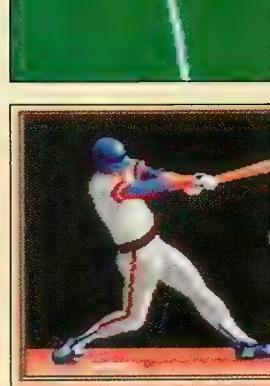
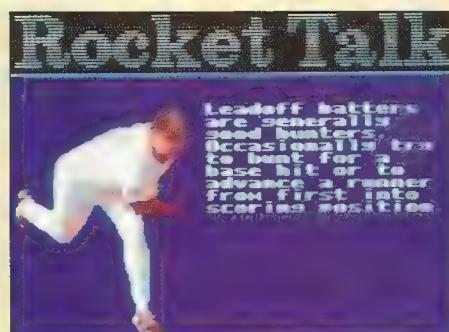
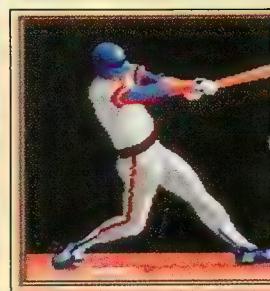
MVP Baseball looks and plays like just about every other baseball game—with one big difference: When the ball is hit, the game switches to a "camera angle" behind the fielder nearest the ball. Various buttons make the fielder run, jump, dive and throw, and the game continually changes "camera angles" to follow the ball around the field. It's a very impressive effect.

Too bad the keen camera angles don't make up for the bungled pitcher/batter sequence (which is the most important part of any baseball game). With most baseball games, you have a high degree of pitch control; in *MVP Baseball*, curves are

very hard to throw for strikes, making it almost impossible to keep the batter guessing. Instead, he can simply wait on the fastball, which you'll throw right down the middle, because that's the only way you'll get a strike.

But wait, it gets worse. In a one-player game, the computer pitcher almost invariably throws change-ups, straight across the plate, like he's pitching batting practice instead of an actual game. This completely ruins the regular-season mode, since the games become little more than home run derbies.

Other problems include the shadow of the ball during the pitcher/batter sequence (which is, I kid you not, a small black X); the useless "Rocket Talk" advice option (most of Roger Clemens' advice is, to quote Ross Perot [anybody remember him?], "obvious to the brain dead"); and the lack of managerial op-



tions (no outfield or infield shifts, no pinch-runners and so on).

MVP Baseball gets points for its unique graphic presentation, but not for much else. Tengen's *RBI Baseball 4* and Sega's *SportsTalk Baseball* both have real major league rosters and superior game play. *MVP Baseball* is worth a look if you plan to play with a friend, but as a solo game, I don't recommend it.

—Zach Meston

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EDITORS' CORNER

AE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
CB	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
DM	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
MD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Despite the nice feel, but cheesy sound. Kidding, Mike and Andy said it was hard to be objective seeing that their names were in the game.

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CIRCLE #123 ON READER SERVICE CARD.

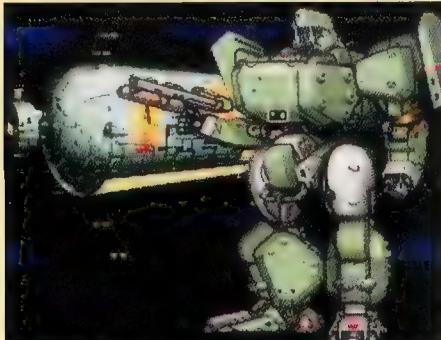
Cybernator

KONAMI

For the Super NES (N/A)

SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Imagine a RoboCop-type character on steroids, in the Marines and blasting his way through spaceships and other installations, and you have a hint of what *Cybernator* is all about.



As an elite Cybernator warrior, and part of the mechanized Marines of the 21st century, the future looks grim. The Earth's fossil fuel supplies are dwindling, and control over the remaining mines, as well as access to territory on the moon, is up for grabs. Problems arise as the Axis powers and Pacific States quarrel, and war breaks out.

Drafted into the Marine Corps of the Pacific States, you are one of the

few, the proud, the talented 10% who have managed to master the controls of the Cybernator "suit"—a five-story, five-ton, heavily armored, personal battle machine. You fight not for pride, nor for glory, but because you are a soldier and it's your job.

Your suit comes equipped with several features: An advanced cannon with 360° rotation, three-way firing and the capability to handle vulcan shells; a laser; and homing missiles are your primary means of attack. For close-up encounters, your suit also packs a mighty "Knucklizer" punch. An indestructible shield may be called up at any time to deflect enemy shells, shrapnel or fallout from explosions. Powerful antigravity leg units, combined with nuclear-fission thrusters, serve to keep your movements nimble as you move about—all in all, quite a formidable outfit.

The action starts out with a nicely animated graphic story line and great background music. There are seven levels to complete in order to defeat the Axis powers, each separated by an introduction and a mission briefing describing your goals for the coming area. Half of the screen depicts a map of your objective, and a smaller, radar-like version may be brought up at any time during your mission to help you get your bearings.

The missions are quite different from one another, with excellent scrolling and graphics throughout.

Fire your vulcan gun and spent shells fly out behind your suit by the handfuls. Pockmarks spread along the floor as your shells strike before you and enemy emplacements explode. Combine this with the heavy thudding sound effects, and you can almost feel the powerful recoil of your guns.

Your suit starts out with only the vulcan weapon, but power-ups are available for adding the others. Power-ups for health and weapon strength are also scattered throughout. One life with three possible continues are all you get to accomplish your missions. I say possible continues because you can live through a mission without accomplishing the main objective, in which case the game ends.

Although I enjoyed the game quite a bit, I wonder somewhat at how long



it will take the average player to finish it. Seven levels isn't much, and the difficulty factor up to the fifth level wasn't too intimidating, though things start to get hairy from there. Longevity questions aside, the game play is solid. *Cybernator* is definitely worth checking out.

—Brent Walker

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EDITORS' CORNER

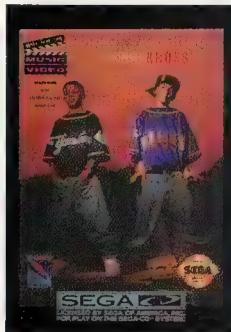
AB	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
CB	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
DM	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
MD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Andy felt *Cybernator* was clunky. Chris said it seems clunky at first, but that it's actually a sharp shoot-'em-up. Dave thought it was pretty unplayable.

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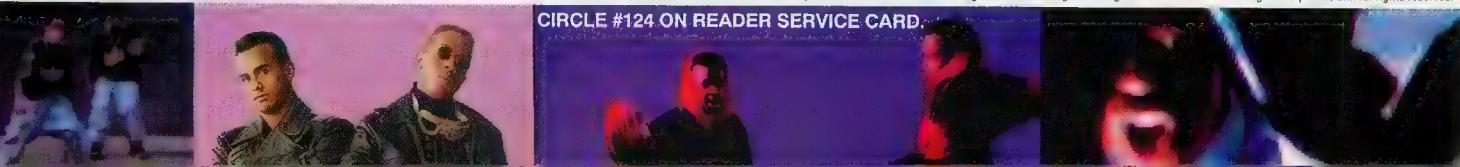
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CIRCLE #124 ON READER SERVICE CARD.



Buster Bros.

TTI

For the TurboGrafx-16/
Turbo Duo (\$49.99)TG-16 owners: TurboGrafx-CD
required.

SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10



Remember *Pang*, the highly cute, highly playable arcade coin-op from 1990? Well, this here's a dead-on conversion with a spiffy new name. (You may have already seen the Super NES version, released by Capcom.)

Whatsat? You never played *Pang*? Well, it's simple really. You're an adventuresome sort armed with a harpoon gun, and you're traveling around the world (by yourself in one-player mode or with a friend in two-player simultaneous mode), stopping in 17 different locations to pop a bunch of bouncing balloons. There are three stages in each location, making 51 stages in all. You can start from any of the first ten locations, which is good, since there are no passwords and only two continues.

In each stage, there are a number of balloons bouncing around the screen (which is generously laden with ladders and platforms). Your goal is to shoot the balloons with your harpoon weapon before time runs out. When a balloon is hit, it breaks into two smaller balloons, which in turn split into even smaller balloons that are destroyed when shot. The smaller balloons bounce much lower on the screen, which makes your life even tougher. If you're touched by a balloon, you lose a life.

Powerful weapons are available during each stage to make the balloon-popping easier, such as the double harpoon (which allows you to shoot two harpoons instead of just one) and the gun (which fires faster than any other weapon, but can't break through certain platforms that the harpoons can). To make things even more interesting, there are nasty creatures buzzing around the screen that can disable your



weapon for a few moments if you're hit by them. (You can destroy the creatures with a few weapon shots.)

The graphics are very nicely drawn, and I'd bet the left side of my brain that they look exactly like the coin-op. I would have liked to see animated background scenes instead of the still pictures that are used, though. The sound effects are good (the balloons give off a particularly satisfying pop), but the music is very, very average.

Which brings me to the only fault I can find with *Buster Bros.*: Why the heck is it on CD-ROM? Take away the so-so music and the nonanimated reward screens after each level, and you've got a game that could easily fit on a TurboChip. Capcom was able to cram the game onto a cartridge while retaining all of the playability; why couldn't Turbo Technologies do the same? Releasing the game as a CD-ROM just prevents Turbo owners without CD-ROMs, and TurboExpress owners, from sharing in the fun. (At least it also prevents those idiotic weasels with cartridge copiers from pirating the game.)

Buster Bros. is a very enjoyable shooting game with a little platform-game and puzzle-game action mixed in. It's just too bad that the majority of TurboGrafx-16 owners won't get to find out.

—Zach Meston

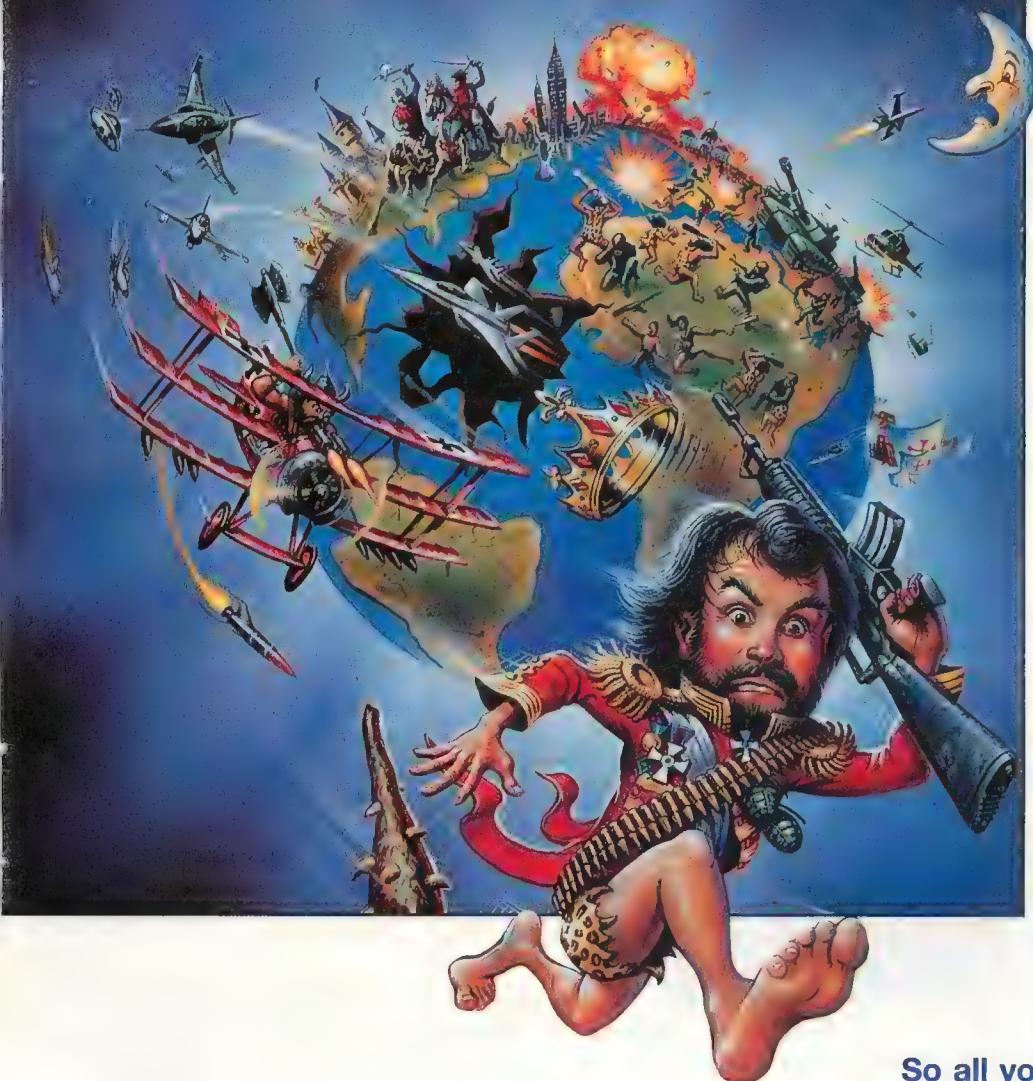
Turbo Technologies Inc.
6701 Center Drive West, Suite 500
Los Angeles, CA 90045
(310) 641-4622

EDITORS' CORNER

AE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
CB	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
DM	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
MD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Mike felt that fans of the *Buster Bros.* coin-op would love this one. Dave, Chris and Andy wondered why it was made less accessible by putting it on CD.

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CIRCLE #125 ON READER SERVICE CARD.



Dragon's Lair

DATA EAST

For the Super NES (\$49.95)

SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

I was very disappointed when I first found that *Dragon's Lair* for the SNES was nothing like the arcade laser-disc original. Besides limitations with the system's graphics and memory (if any), why would the game makers settle for turning Dirk the Daring's adventure into just another formulaic sword slasher?

This misgiving quickly waned after I played it. For one, there are hardly any SNES titles in this gaming category that are as well executed and playable as Data East's *Dragon's Lair*. And this one is extremely challenging—make that *difficult*—to finish in a couple of tries, even when playing the supposedly "easy" mode.

Also, I realize the designers meant to translate the original *Dragon's Lair*



in the same fashion that feature films are brought to the video-game screen: by taking characters and elements from the story, and developing game screens based on plot situations. This makes sense when you take into account that the laser-disc game



played more like an interactive movie than a traditional arcade coin-op.

The game's plot is a rescue mission—you know, a princess needs saving. In this case, it's the scantily clad Princess Daphne, held captive in the Castle Mordroc by Singe the dragon. Dirk the Daring, of course, is the hero. He has to hot-step it into the evil castle, slay a bunch of evil creatures and then slay Singe himself to get to the winsome Daph.

Dirk's primary weapon is his sword. A press of the button makes him pull the sword from its sheath and hike it into ready position. Release the button, and he swings it with the expected "swish." There are an additional three kinds of throwing weapons (only one of which Dirk can have at a time) found by slashing gems scattered throughout the levels. They can be axes, knives or bladed stars that boomerang back to injure Dirk.

Completing a level mainly involves leaping Dirk from platform to platform and slashing snakes, trolls and some of the adversaries from the laser-disc game—but most of the characters from the original *Dragon's Lair* star as giant monsters that must be destroyed so Dirk can advance to the next stage. Dirk also negotiates ropes, moves weights or anvils, bounces on springs and swims through water inside an enclosed air bubble.

The goal is to find an exit in each level, after which a map of the castle is shown, and the player can move from the just completed level to another one. Since there is usually more than one exit to be found, some will simply return Dirk to where he originally started. Levels already completed may be played again to earn extra life energy for Dirk or to gather other weapons.

Though the sword handling might seem a little slow initially to beginners, it's preferable to depending on the throwing weapons. Dirk's slip-footedness takes getting used to as well, since he doesn't arrive at a complete stop as soon as the controls are let go. But these things of the vid-game Dirk mimic the grace and fluidity of the cartoon hero.

Speaking of which, the only thing missing from this *Dragon's Lair* is the fine animation of Don Bluth and company. It would have been a great touch if animated shorts derived from the laser-disc coin-op had been implemented between stages of the game. That's all that's missing from an otherwise fine translation.

—Howard Wen

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EDITORS' CORNER

AE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
CB	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
DM	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
MD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Mike liked the fluidity of the animation, and Chris felt it was much more interactive than the laser-disc original. Andy thought the control was very poor.

"RELAX PRETEND IT'S A GAME!"



180 225 270

ACTUAL IMAGES

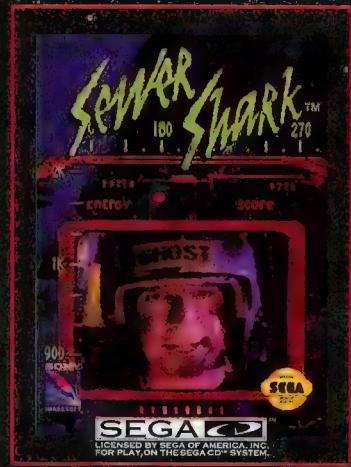


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CIRCLE #126 ON READER SERVICE CARD

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IMAGESOFT

PGA TOUR Golf II

ELECTRONIC ARTS

For the Sega Genesis (\$59.95)

SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

EA practically owns video-game sports, shrugging off most of the competition with ease (with the notable exceptions of basketball, which seems to be a source of endless near misses for EA, and baseball, where it doesn't even seem to be competing). The Genesis version of EA's *PGA TOUR Golf* was a visually disappointing but very playable simulation of the PGA tour; now a lot of improvements have been made to the original. The result: Still visually disappointing, but even more playable...the biggest and richest golf video game on the market.

Let's get the minor unpleasantries out of the way. As in the first *PGA TOUR Golf* (not just the Genesis version, but the IBM PC version as well), the graphics are mediocre. The palette is limited, the colors are few and what colors there are tend to be cartoonish. There is some dithering of the roughs that wasn't in the original, but this is a small touch that doesn't add much to the graphic appeal.



The other limitation centers around aiming. The game automatically aims for you, and you have the option to change it if you want to try a unique approach. But the lack of detail makes this awkward; you often can't see the pin or the hazards, and you may have to switch back and forth from the overhead view in order to figure out how to adjust your aim. (The amazing computer game *LINKS 386 Pro* has a small but terrific feature that zooms the pin into view temporarily, helping you orient your aim; EA could take a lesson from that and some of the other features in that program.) There are numerous other ways to view each hole, such as with a movable camera, an automatic flyby or a close-up grid of the green, but they're slow and not too convenient. When putting, the aiming cursor is located above the green, nowhere near either the hole or your ball, again making a change of aim more cumbersome than need be.

Now for the good news, and there's lots of it: seven, count 'em, seven full



courses, as well as a putting green and a driving range; practice, skins and tournament modes; four-player capability (with computer-controlled or human players); battery backup (get this—the game constantly updates and memorizes *all* your stats); instant replays; digitized sounds (including a nice series of loud moans or groans for your near-misses); drop-down menus; draw and fade shots; and different golfer animations, depending on whether you drive, chip or putt. Altogether, this is nearly as sophisticated a golfing package as most computer golf games.

As in the previous version of the game, you're given constant updates as to the state of the PGA tour, and real players are featured. The manual is an exhaustive guide not only to the video game, but to the tour itself, the players and the courses.

It's clear that EA is going all out to capture the video-golfing market, much as it's done with hockey and football. Now if it could just produce a golfing game that *looks* as good as it plays (*True Golf Classics* for the SNES would be a good role model for graphics), it would have an unqualified winner. Even so, *PGA TOUR Golf II* is the video golf game to beat.

—Josh Mandel

Electronic Arts
1450 Fashion Island Blvd.
San Mateo, CA 94404
(800) 245-4525

EDITORS' CORNER

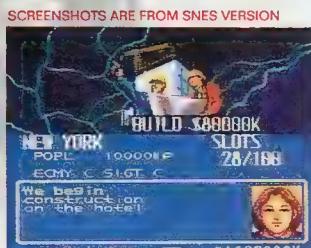
AE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
CB	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
DM	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
MD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Mike felt it was an improved sequel, and Andy called it a strong golf game with lots of options. Chris thought the animation was still a bit jerky.

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Team NFL

N

O

An interview with Tom Walsh.

Raider's Asst. Coach/Co-Designer—NFL Sportstalk.

p a i n - k i l l e r s .

How is the new NFL Sportstalk Football '93 better than the previous one?

For starters, we used a new process called digitized animation. It's about ten times more realistic, because we actually filmed an NFL player, Marcus Wilson, running through the plays. We then digitized the image, so it's virtual reality.

No contracts.

How are the plays different?

The previous game had 50 or so plays. The new one has thousands. I worked with Joe Montana to develop a play book based on the real NFL team plays, and each team's plays will be different. The more plays you know, the better you'll do.

No cheesey

So it's like coaching a real team.

Exactly, right on down to knowing the characteristics of individual players and teams. Your skill at choosing the right play at the right time determines whether or not you will beat the opposing team. Just like the real thing.

half-time entertainment.

Could it actually be used to train real players?

Actually, people have said that it would make a good coach's helper, kind of like a live textbook. I used to play football with the guy who developed the game for Sega. And when he approached me to do this, the goal was that it was to be the most realistic and authentic video sport game out there. I think we succeeded heavily. It's a really terrific game.

(Other than that, pretty realistic football.)



Super Strike Eagle

MICROPROSE

For the Super NES (\$69.95)

SOUND/MUSIC 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

GRAPHICS 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

PLAYABILITY 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

OVERALL 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

You'd expect that MicroProse, the company behind premier F-15 flight simulators for home computers, would bring a similar quality simulation to the SNES. Nope. Should it be any surprise that *Super Strike Eagle* is less of a jet-fighter simulator in terms of *F-22 Interceptor* for the Genesis and more of a "Nintendo-friendly" shooter like *Top Gun II* and *Ultimate Air Combat* for the old 8-bit NES? Perhaps not. There is one positive thing going for *Super Strike Eagle*: It's a pretty good



assaults on Cuba and North Korea. Basically, a mission involves flying into enemy airspace to blow away a target while dogfighting any MiG-29s sent out to stop you.

Upon being briefed of your military objective (and told how many points and other bonuses you'll get for blowing up certain things), you take off in your F-15 from the deck of an aircraft carrier. From there, a map is shown, designating your jet, any enemy MiGs and the country you're to invade. A first-person view of the jet cockpit, with heads-up targeting display, comes up when you and a MiG are within range of one another. The dogfight begins, and the limited weapons at your disposal are cannon guns and any air-to-air missiles your F-15 might have.

Should you survive the aerial combat, the screen changes to an overhead view of your jet with the land or sea below it. Avoiding flak bursts and antiaircraft fire, you follow your plane's navigation arrow to the final target, a military installation, that you are to destroy with air-to-ground missiles. Along the way, you can—and should, if possible—take out air bases, missile launchers and other setups, too, so that your plane won't be harassed by attacks from them. After the primary target is blown up, it's

back to your own flight carrier or air base, where you get your next mission briefing.

A weapons systems screen can be called up where you will adjust the F-15's navigation arrow to track either the enemy target that needs to be blown up or your own carrier or air base, where you can land for repairs and rearming. The weapons systems screen also lists weapons remaining for your jet and any damage

to it. A second player can be the Weapons Systems Officer, using the second controller to keep track of all of this information for the pilot; but the role of the WSO is pretty useless, as this person doesn't do much.

It's the sound, not the graphics, of *Super Strike Eagle* that really puts you in the game. The graphics are okay, but the dogfighting cockpit view comes across as pretty average. The takeoff, landing and overhead bombing sequences look the best, and the bombing run is the most fun to play. The result is that the first-person viewpoint appears out of place with the entire game.

The designers behind *Super Strike Eagle* wanted a jet game that looked like a flight simulator while it played like an arcade shooter. They should have done the obvious to make this game better, rather than trying to have it both ways: Drop the cockpit viewpoint for a third-person view of the F-15 for the dogfights. Sure, this would completely depart from MicroProse's flight simulator traditions, but, alas, *Super Strike Eagle* already does so anyway.

—Howard Wen

MicroProse
180 Lakefront Drive
Hunt Valley, MD 21030
(410) 771-1151

EDITORS' CORNER

AE 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

CB 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

DM 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

MD 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Andy said that *Super Strike Eagle* was a good air-combat simulator with durability. Dave said it wasn't for the casual player, but a good demo of the SNES.

Aerobiz

KOEI

For the Super NES (\$74.95)

SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

It seems to me that simulations are the perfect combination of education and entertainment. In the guise of a game, they let you dabble in some exotic real-life activity without the risks inherent in the real world. And while you're struggling to win a carefully planned scenario, you're painlessly learning important lessons in finance, sociology, biology, physics and any one of hundreds of other fields of study. Luckily for those who are inclined, more and more simulations are being released for video-game consoles every day. One of the most recent is Koei's excellent *Aerobiz*.

In this fascinating airline simulation, you get to take over a major airline. And, as the company's CEO, it's up to you to guide the company from its fledgling beginnings through its growth into a major world financial power. As you struggle to keep your company in the air, you'll need to spend money wisely, make sound investments, supervise your managers, maximize profits and do everything in your power to ensure a solid bottom line.

Although *Aerobiz* is always a four-player game, any or all of the players



may be run by the computer, so you will never be stuck without competition. In addition, you can set up that competition most anyway you like, by choosing a scenario, a company name, a difficulty level and even your starting headquarters. Once you've got the game options set the way you like them, you will be awarded the job of CEO and set off on your long and challenging climb toward the financial pinnacle.

Once you take over as CEO, your first task is to open new routes and assign planes to them. This process requires that you not only locate cities in which you've successfully negotiated for slots, but also assign to the routes the type and number of planes, as well as the number of flights per week those planes will make. Finally, after setting up the route, you set the fare, which puts your planes into action.

Because you can set up routes only to cities in which you have been awarded slots, you must keep your managers constantly negotiating for



new slots in cities all over the world. If they don't keep hopping, the competition will get access to all the major airports, leaving many of your planes land-bound.

Negotiating for slots is only a small part of the business, though. You must also order new planes to assign to new routes; build new branch offices, from which you can create new routes; manage the company's budget by providing the funds for repairs, advertising and service; and even administer the money set aside in the budgets to market specific routes, hotels and networks. If you fall behind in any of these important business activities, you'll surely lose your seat at the head of the board.

If you stay on top of your business, your airline will grow like a weed over a septic tank. You'll be able to increase your service by building hotels, buying more planes and opening a huge network of routes. A successful airline will have a flight going just about anywhere passengers want to go. In the end, it will be the company that provides the most for the least that'll champion the skies.

In short, *Aerobiz* is a fascinating game from a company with a long line of excellent strategy games. My guess is that this game will be a highflier for some time to come.

—Clayton Walnum

Koei Corp.
One Bay Plaza, Suite 540
Burlingame, CA 94010
(415) 348-0200

EDITORS' CORNER

AE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
CB	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
DM	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
MD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Chris liked *Aerobiz* a lot, calling it "a cool thinking-person's game." Mike felt it should have been renamed *SimAir*, and Andy called it an "interesting simulator."

Samurai Ghost

TTI

For the TurboGrafx-16/
Turbo Duo (\$54.99)

SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

If you're like me, it's such a big let-down when you have to play a game without knowing the exciting background and story line that accompanies it (no-cough-documentation), so bear with me.

Basically, the game consists of one ghost samurai (that's you), traveling through several different areas of some land, slicing up monsters and bosses along the way. A horizontally scrolling jump-and-slasher, you might venture to say.

Seriously though, although there aren't any complex moves, special weapons or other major dress-up items to make this one particularly



different from others you may have seen, the old cliché still holds true: There is always room for another game of X type, if it's a good one.

Samurai Ghost starts out with a large map, displayed as a portion of an unrolled scroll, that shows your character's position and current progress, as well as those areas that haven't yet been beaten.

Each "zone" (of which there are six, as far as I can tell) consists of three or four areas before the boss arrives. Zone labels such as "volcanic zone," "arctic zone" and the "hurting zone" give an idea of what lies ahead. At the end of each zone, a large portal appears (similar to the ones found in *Karateka*, for those who remember it), which will take you to the next area. In some areas, two gates are visible either at the end of a level or after a boss has been defeated. These provide some variety to the game, as each of the gates leads in a different direction, through different (and possibly more difficult) areas.

Your samurai starts each game with three lives and unlimited continues. Each life is measured by several candles at the top of the screen. Take a hit, and a bit of candle disappears. If you make it through an area, but with only a small stub of candle left, not to worry: Your health is restored to a minimum of four candles at the beginning of each level. Health power-ups scattered about also help keep your "ghost" in prime fighting condition.

Although unlimited continues often serve to make a game too easy, and therefore reduce its playlife, here they definitely come in handy. Enemies are plentiful, and, when mixed with natural obstacles such as slippery ice in the arctic areas, lava pits, falling rocks and lightning bolts from above, there is little time to relax. Archers who shoot flaming arrows, frogs that will attach themselves to your legs to suck the life out of you, huge ants that take up half the



screen and giant worms that crawl upon the ceilings of underground caverns all apparently have a lust for samurai bones to munch on.

Add to this package some good graphics and an energetic soundtrack, and *Samurai Ghost* turns into a pretty solid game after all, and one that should please most TG-16 owners.

—Brent Walker

Turbo Technologies Inc.
6701 Center Drive West, Suite 500
Los Angeles, CA 90045
(310) 641-4622

EDITORS' CORNER

AE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
CB	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
DM	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
MD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Everyone agreed that *Samurai Ghost* was a disappointment, though Chris called it an "acquired taste." The animation was universally attacked for being stiff.

Trade Up!

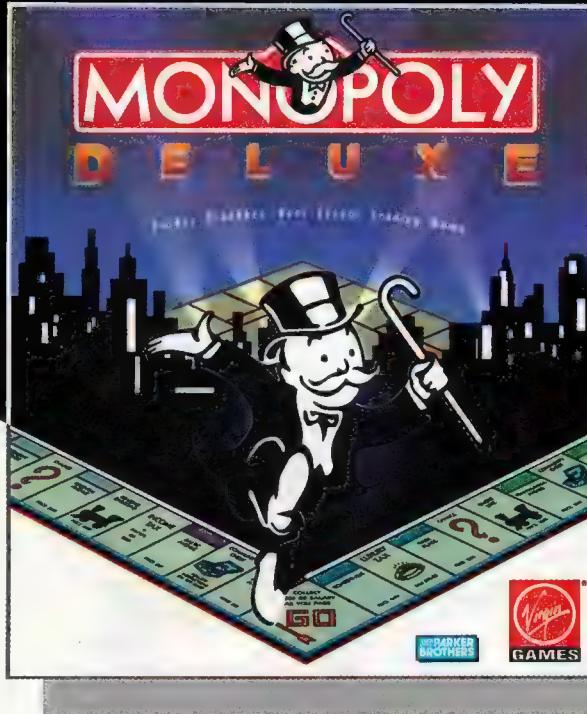
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WINDOWS™ version



WINDOWS™ version

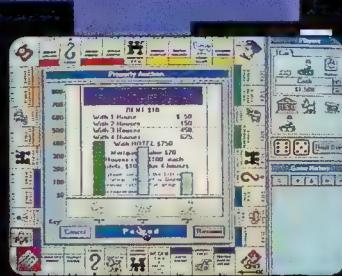


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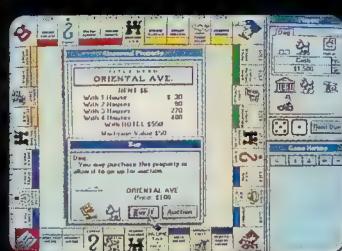
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IBM PC version



IBM PC version

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The Adventures of Willy Beamish

DYNAMIX

For the Genesis with Sega CD
(\$69.95)

SOUND/MUSIC 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

GRAPHICS 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

PLAYABILITY 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

OVERALL 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10



Sierra isn't taking any chances in deciding which of its popular computer titles should be ported over to the Sega CD: *The Adventures of Willy Beamish* earned an overall 9 rating in the pages of the March 1992 issue of *VG&CE*. Like the lion's share of Sierra/Dynamix titles, it's a point-and-click adventure game with a wry sense of humor, and it includes plenty of puzzle-solving, decision-making and animation sequences.

As the young Beamish, you must outsmart your peers, superiors and family members in your quest to participate in the Nintari video-game championships. Along the way, you'll get wrapped up in various subplots that involve terrorism, kidnapping and frog-jumping contests—though not necessarily in that order.

Though the game's story line is not flawed, certain parts of the adventure left me somewhat confused on the issue of how Willy should act. In the earlier sections of the game, it's important to behave yourself in order to keep Willy from being sent to military school. Yet, some of the dialogue menus only allow you to choose from three different sarcastic remarks, and it's up to you to determine which is least offensive. Other times, you'll make a harmless comment and the computer will follow up the other person's response with a wisecrack, putting words in Willy's mouth that you didn't necessarily intend to be there.

Of course, it's all in good fun, and there are plenty of scenarios in the game in which you're expected to act like a juvenile delinquent. By the time Willy sneaks into the Golden Bowl Bar and steals a "nudie calendar," you will have seen and

heard plenty of things that you'd never have experienced in a Nintendo-approved title. Nothing particularly offensive—but I did get a kick out of the schoolteacher's response when Willy told her the name of his pet frog, Horny. ("What did you call me?")

As a straightforward translation of the IBM PC version of *Willy Beamish*—squeezed into the Genesis' color palette—the graphics here aren't quite as enchanting as the images that appeared in the original. There's also a problem with disc access time, and I'm sure that anyone who has been spoiled by the full-motion video in games like *Night Trap* and *Sewer Shark* will not be too thrilled by the limited animation of characters like the school principal, Mr. Frick—whenever his mouth stops moving, the beads of sweat that roll down his bald head stop moving too.

The Sega CD version of *The Adventures of Willy Beamish* is not bad for an early effort on a new, unproven platform, but I know that both Sierra and the Sega CD are capable of much more than this. Expect better things from Dynamix's *Stellar 7* Sega CD, which—unlike *Willy Beamish*—is being reprogrammed from the ground up to take better advantage of the capabilities of the system it's played on.

—Chris Bieniek

Sierra On-Line
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Oakhurst, CA 93644
(209) 683-4468

EDITORS' CORNER

AE 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

CB 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

DM 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

MD 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Everyone commented on the slow access time. Andy called it "painfully slow." Otherwise, Dave felt it was a "cool" game, and Andy thought it was "good-looking."

Tiny Toon Adventures Cartoon Workshop

KONAMI

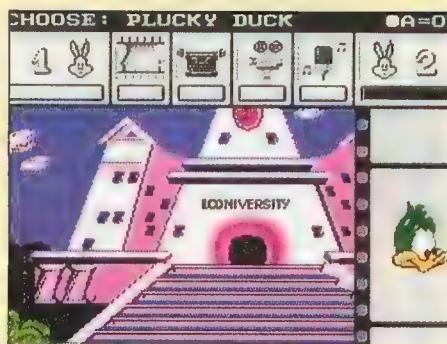
For the Nintendo Entertainment System (N/A)

SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Warning to all parents: Hide your NESes before it's too late. Pull the fuses and throw out the TV. But whatever you do, don't let this cart into your house. Otherwise you're going to hear more cries of, "Hey, Mom, watch this!" than the first time your kids discovered diving boards. They'll be directing their own Saturday morning *Tiny Toons* cartoons and, probably, driving everybody nuts.

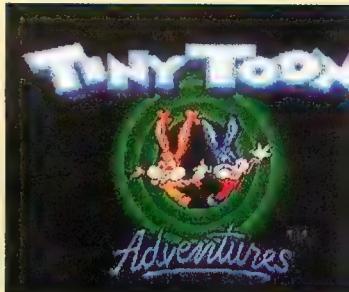
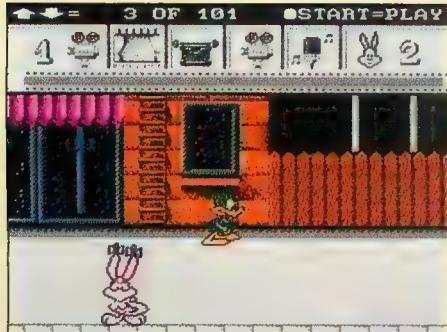
The way the *Cartoon Workshop* works is to give you a handful of backgrounds; a cast of (most of the) *Tiny Toons* characters, each with an individual menu of animated sequences and gags; a collection of sound effects and musical pieces; and a bunch of silly phrases. Once you figure out the editing procedure, you can assemble the bits and pieces into a finished cartoon, up to about eight minutes long. Save your masterpiece to videotape for posterity (there are instructions for hooking up a VCR to the NES); there's no battery backup, so the cartoon can't be saved directly to the cart. It's a great concept, requiring more imagination and concentration than the average video game, and the results are something you can take pride in.

There are significant limitations, though. The editing system is initially confusing. Young children



will probably stay confused and will definitely need constant help. So don't imagine you'll be able to buy this cart for your six-year-old and send him off to play; he'll be yanking on your pants leg for help within seconds, and it'll be that way for good. Yet by using the *Tiny Toons* characters, the cart is aimed to appeal specifically to young children. Weird!

The second consideration applies to those older children (i.e., the rest of us) who are fascinated by the idea of directing their own cartoons, and will really get into it. While the *Workshop* does a great job of providing lots of detailed, scrolling backgrounds (some even have background animation of their own), there's only so many times you can see the



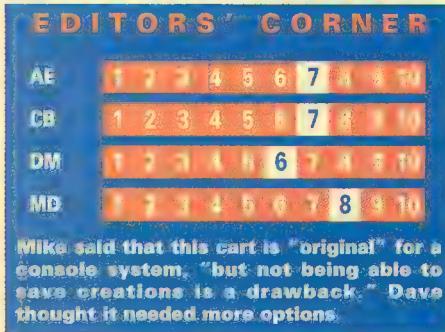
same characters perform the same few sight gags over and over. Each character has several gags, with numerous slight variations, in addition to standard sequences like walking, standing still and so on. This problem could be overcome if the text feature would allow you to input your own text, to create plots, tell jokes, personalize messages, etc.—but it doesn't. You're stuck using the same phrases repeatedly. "Why me?" doesn't pack too much of a comedic wallop the 20th time around.

The documentation does an admirable job of describing all of the bells and whistles. The walk-through, which guides you through the creation of a simple cartoon, is most helpful, though it contains at least one mistake, which resulted in a mangled cartoon (it may have been an early version of the documentation). Missing was coverage of how to edit out previous flubs.

All in all, it's an attractive, well-engineered cartoon machine whose only noticeable flaws are its lack of flexible text input and the conflict between the complexity of its operation and the kiddie appeal of its characters. Those of us who aren't daunted by these limitations are bound to have a pretty good time playing Chuck Jones and vying for the cartoon Academy Award.

—Josh Mandel

Konami
900 Deerfield Parkway
Buffalo Grove, IL 60089-4570
(708) 215-5100



EDITORS' CORNER

AE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
CB	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
DM	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
MD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Mike said that this cart is "original" for a console system, "but not being able to save creations is a drawback." Dave thought it needed more options.

Universal Soldier

BALLISTIC/ACCOLADE

For the Super NES (\$54.95)

SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

In 1990, there was *Turrican*, a run/jump/shoot game that appeared on virtually every 8-bit and 16-bit computer in Europe. (I myself have the Amiga version.) *Turrican* was a decent game for its time, but suffered from being simply too big—there were so many hidden items and areas to find that it all became rather boring after a few hours. In 1991, Accolade licensed *Turrican* and produced several video-game versions, all of which were as blah as the computer versions. Now we have *Universal Soldier*, which is a "remix" of *Turrican* with new graphics, new sound and the same extremely tedious game play.

For those of you who missed the movie last summer, *Universal Soldier* is the heartwarming story of Luc Devraux, a soldier in Vietnam who kills, and is killed by, the completely bonkers captain of his platoon. (They shoot each other simultaneously.)

Luc and his captain, Andrew Scott, are revived in the 1990s and turned



into Universal Soldiers, perfect killing machines with no memory of their past lives and pumped full of chemicals to keep it that way. Unfortunately, Scott and Devraux regain their memories, triggering an endless series of car chases and fight scenes—in the movie. In the game, you get an endless series of levels—11 in all.

In each level, you run, jump and shoot bad guys while collecting weapons, special items and 1-ups.

Andrew Scott. Play through the game, beat all the bosses and you get a lame, scrolling-text reward sequence.

The major problem with *Universal Soldier* is that it's just no fun to explore each massive level. There are only a few types of enemies, and there aren't any particularly tricky areas; you just run and shoot and run some more. If you're going to design a game this big, you need variety in the enemies and variety in the game play. *Universal Soldier* has neither.

The graphics in *Universal Soldier* are simply awful, from the sprites to the backgrounds to the Big Bosses. (The game's final boss is so bad, I could have drawn it.) The sound effects are okay, but the music tends to grate the old nerves after a few plays.

The not-so-kind verdict: *Universal Soldier* might be worth a rental, but there's just no way I can recommend you buy it with so many excellent Super NES platform games on the market. Even Accolade itself is soon to release a very keen platform game (*Bubsy in: Claws Encounters of the Furred Kind*), so I'd suggest you wait for that one and treat *Universal Soldier* as missing in action.

—Zach Meston

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San Jose, CA 95128
(408) 985-1700



(The 1-ups are somewhat meaningless, since you get a password after each level.) Some weapons are easy to find, but most of them are stashed inside hidden blocks; each level has so many hidden blocks, though, that you'll invariably find one or three.

At the end of some levels, you encounter what the manual calls a "Big Boss." There are five different Big Bosses, four of them vehicles and one of them a laughably oversized

EDITORS' CORNER

AE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
CB	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
DM	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
MD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Dave called *Universal Soldier* "a bad use of a bad license." Mike said it was worse than the Genesis version, and wished he could move the gun.

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You'd high-tail it after them and stop at nothing to save her, that's what — 'cause you're Congo, the monkey-turned-superkid, and only you can uphold the law of the jungle! But it's more than a jungle out there — your search for little Congette will take you from ghost towns to pirate ships to ninja castles to the belly of a Tyrannosaurus. This is no time for a banana-break — you'd better get down to monkey business!

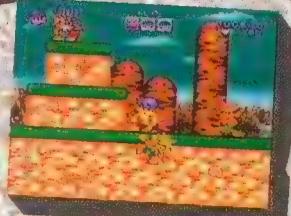
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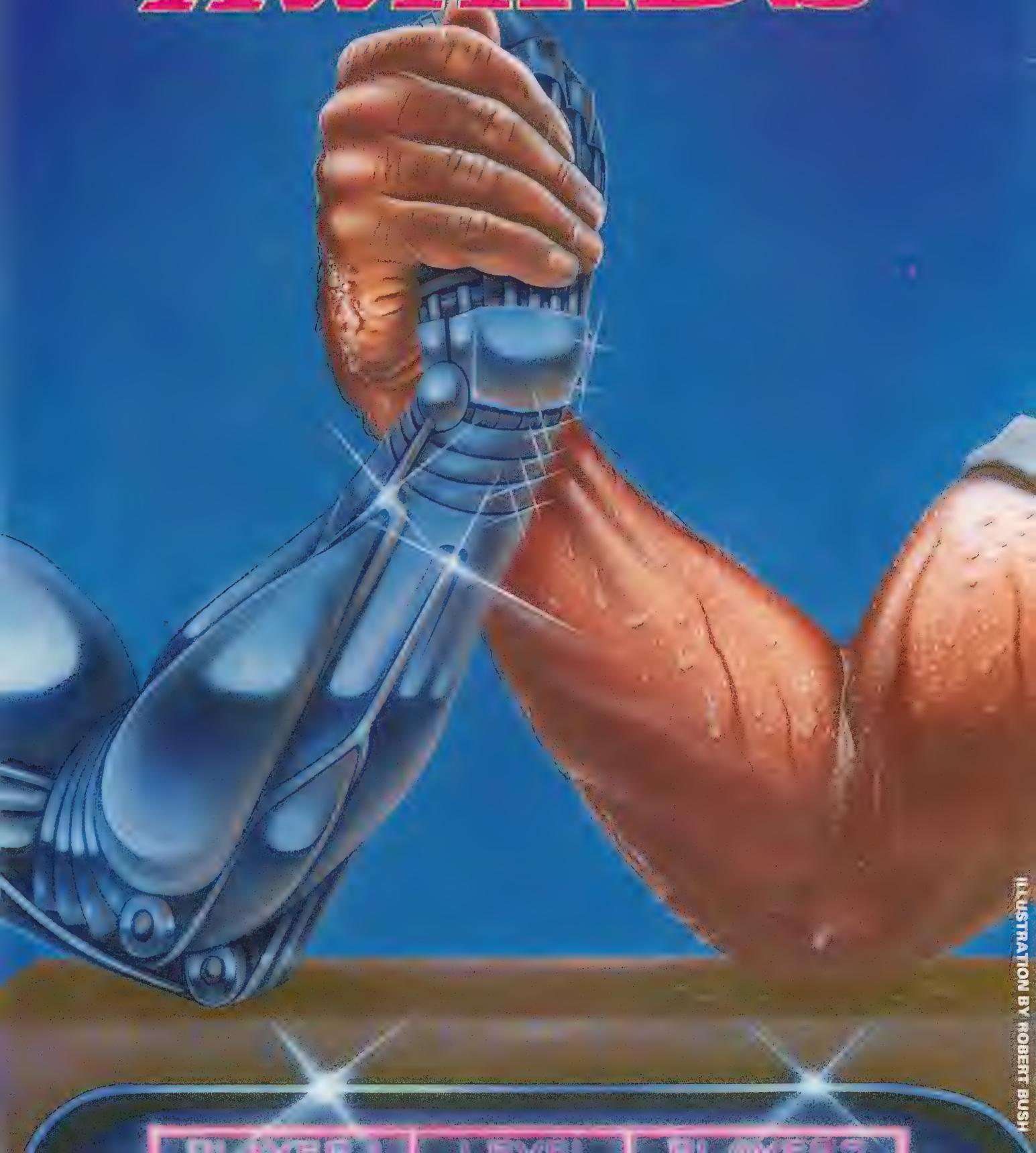
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VG&CE'S BEST GAMES OF 1992 AWARDS



PLAYERS' CHOICE AWARDS

BY DAVID S. MOSKOWITZ AND THE EDITORS OF VG&CE

Welcome to VG&CE's awards for the best games of 1992. Each year, the editors consult their reviewers, readers and other affiliates to try to determine the best video and computer games of the past 12 months. With the glut of new software and hardware releases each year, it's not an easy task: The room may not be smoky, but the review process is brutal, with insults hurled, tastes derided and egos crushed—and that's before we determine the winners!

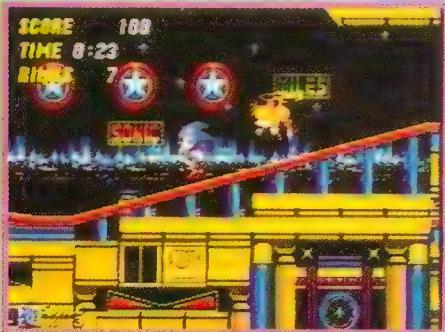
This year marks the first time that the video and computer games are divided into the same categories, as the VG&CE editors have put together what could be considered the ultimate buyer's guide.

Unlike most awards, we have no self-serving celebrities, no tacky dance numbers and, most importantly, no long wait before awarding our most prestigious award, Game of the Year.

BEST VIDEO GAMES OF THE YEAR

VIDEO GAME OF THE YEAR

To be chosen VG&CE's Video Game of the Year, a game needs to have everything: great graphics, incredible sound, playability, longevity and enough secret stuff to keep the completists happy. Last year, *Sonic the Hedgehog* was the obvious choice, scoring high in all categories. Well, one year later, Sega has done more than milk the name and reputation of its Genesis pack-in—it has earned top honors for *Sonic the Hedgehog 2*.



What's new in *Sonic 2*? To begin with, the star has more moves: He now flips from front to back, pinwheels his arms and legs differently on the edge of a precipice and can even do a rolling spin-dash from a dead start. Sonic's also

got a sidekick who provides more than comedic relief: Tails not only gets rings and triggers traps, he allows two-player simultaneous competition.

The game also includes a brand-new bonus stage, a mad dash for rings that leads down a long, twisting chute.

Our favorite stage? The Casino Night Zone. Sonic bounces around like a pinball in action so enjoyable you won't want to find the exit. Then again, most of the zones are so long and detailed that forgetting to finish them will be the only problem facing players of this 8-meg wonder.

HONORABLE MENTION: *Street Fighter II* (Capcom for the SNES) and *Super Star Wars* (JVC/LucasArts for the SNES).

BEST SPORTS VIDEO GAME

Only two things can make a bad football game good: a nagging significant other in the other room or the presence of John Madden. *John Madden Football*



'93 (the Sega Genesis version) earns VG&CE's Best Sports Video Game award not only for its wide selection of plays and easy execution, but also for the improvements over last year's *Madden '92* cartridge. Besides a battery backup, a no-huddle offense, eight additional "best ever" teams and split-screen play calling, the game has more Madden. He comments on all of the most violent plays in a series of great digitized sound bites, and his coaching experience is always available when selecting plays and teams. Combining the corpulent coach with the team of programmer Mark Lesser (Mattel's original handheld football game) and artist Doug Wilke (*Might & Magic II*, *Ultima Underworld*) shows EA's commitment to doing more than rerelease last year's game with updated statistics.

HONORABLE MENTION: *David Crane's Amazing Tennis* (Absolute for the SNES) and *Baseball Stars 2* (SNK for the Neo-Geo).

BEST ACTION VIDEO GAME

It almost singlehandedly revived the coin-op video-game business. When the home version was released in Japan, fans camped out overnight and American stores immediately sold out of the \$140 Japanese imports. It continues to dominate the VG&CE mailboxes, the marketplace and the creative department of most developers. It's also a great game, and Capcom's *Street Fighter II* for the SNES truly deserves recognition as Best Action Video Game of the year. This 3.5-million-selling cartridge contains just about everything the coin-op does, except for a few background animations and certain bits of speech. All of the secret moves—from Chun Li's "spinning bird kick" to Ryu's fireballs—made it into this 16-meg game. Anyone who still doubts the quality of *SFII* should check out the competition; there is no comparison.



HONORABLE MENTION: *Sonic the Hedgehog 2* (Sega for the Genesis) and *Super Mario Kart* (Nintendo for the SNES).

BEST SIMULATION VIDEO GAME

For the most part, cartridge-based flight simulators are usually disappointments or outright failures. Filled with a mass of slow-moving polygons, most aren't worth the hours it takes to learn them, let alone the time required to successfully complete a mission. It's the absence of these problems that makes Electronic Arts' *F22 Interceptor* for the



Genesis such a runaway winner as 1992's Best Video Game Simulation.

As any computer flight simulator veteran knows, giving the player enough options to make combat challenging yet realistic requires a large number of different commands. Yet *F22* manages quite well with the Genesis controller, and, by the time players need to use the two-button combination commands, they'll have logged more than enough flight time to be able to handle the challenge.

Containing three difficulty levels, dozens of missions and the option to square off against the world's greatest aces, *F22* even has long-term playability. Computer software developers should get a copy and see what can be done without

hogging so much memory or half a hard disk drive.

HONORABLE MENTION: *Turn & Burn* (Absolute for the Game Boy) and *Steel Talons* (Atari for the Lynx).

BEST STRATEGY VIDEO GAME

Perhaps the only hybrid of the role-playing and strategy genres, *Warsong*'s (Treco for the Genesis) 20-scenario story of Garrett's quest for the ancient sword and control of his father's kingdom was



so engaging that it was a natural for the Best Strategy Video Game of the year award. Unlike most strategy games which start players on the map, *Warsong* requires planning in the early stages:

Which magical items should be given to which of the leaders? What kinds of troops should be hired, and how many? And how should they be arranged on the battlefield?

One of *Warsong*'s most greatest attributes is that the animated depictions of battle—which often slow games down with unnecessary graphics—give insight into what kinds of weapons the enemy uses, as well as their effectiveness against the allies.

A strategy game with experience levels for leaders is an oddity, but *Warsong*'s success shows how it can be done—and should be done on all platforms.

HONORABLE MENTION: *Lemmings* (Sunsoft for the SNES) and *Pyramids of Ra* (Matchbox for the Game Boy).

BEST ACTION-STRATEGY VIDEO GAME

The 8-bit *Legend of Zelda* games were two of the best reasons to buy the NES, so, when Nintendo released its 16-bit machine, fans were clamoring for a souped-up adventure featuring their favorite elf. This year's action-strategy winner, *The Legend of Zelda: A Link to the*

THE FIVE BLOODIEST VIDEO GAMES

During the recent Christmas buying season, if you were exposed to any media at all, you no doubt were inundated with advertisements promising "bigger, faster and better." But, when it comes to game play, "bloodier" cannot be overlooked as a favorite selling point. So, here are our Top Five Bloodiest Video Games for your ravaging amusement. It's interesting that most of those that made the list are available only for the Sega Genesis—apparently Sega's violence standards are less strict than Nintendo's.

5) *Splatterhouse 2* (Namco for the Genesis). If you liked the film *Night of the Living Dead* (and who didn't?), you'll love *Splatterhouse 2*. The player walks

across zombie-infested arenas and goes toe-to-toe with zombies, bloodsuckers and assorted nasties. Start out by splitting zombies open with a punch and watching the green ooze spill out, and end up duking it out with the main boss, an overgrown placenta that looks like an intestine. One downside: The game play is a little slow.

4) *Super Smash TV* (Flying Edge for the Genesis/Acclaim for the SNES). For many, *Super Smash TV* is two fantasies in one: The chance to be on a game show and the opportunity to slay hundreds of opponents. Here's the best part: After you shoot or grenade enemies, they spray blood before disappearing. It's sort of like *Family Feud* with heavy artillery. Talk about your family values!

3) *Alien* (Arena for the Genesis). *Alien* is true to its movie namesake in terms of the graphic detail of the violence. What gives this game its Bloody Best ranking is not so much the action (after you blast an alien into pieces, it disappears from the screen), but the fact that, in the third level, skinned body carcasses are hanging on the walls. May not be suitable for young children or older grandmothers.

2) *Pit Fighter* (Tengen for the Genesis). Both versions of this game are nasty, but the Genesis one takes the cake. On the street, you have to know your basic punches and kicks, but any true street fighter knows that isn't enough: You need knives and shurikens! And watch out for "innocent" bystanders, cause they'll stab you too! Here's

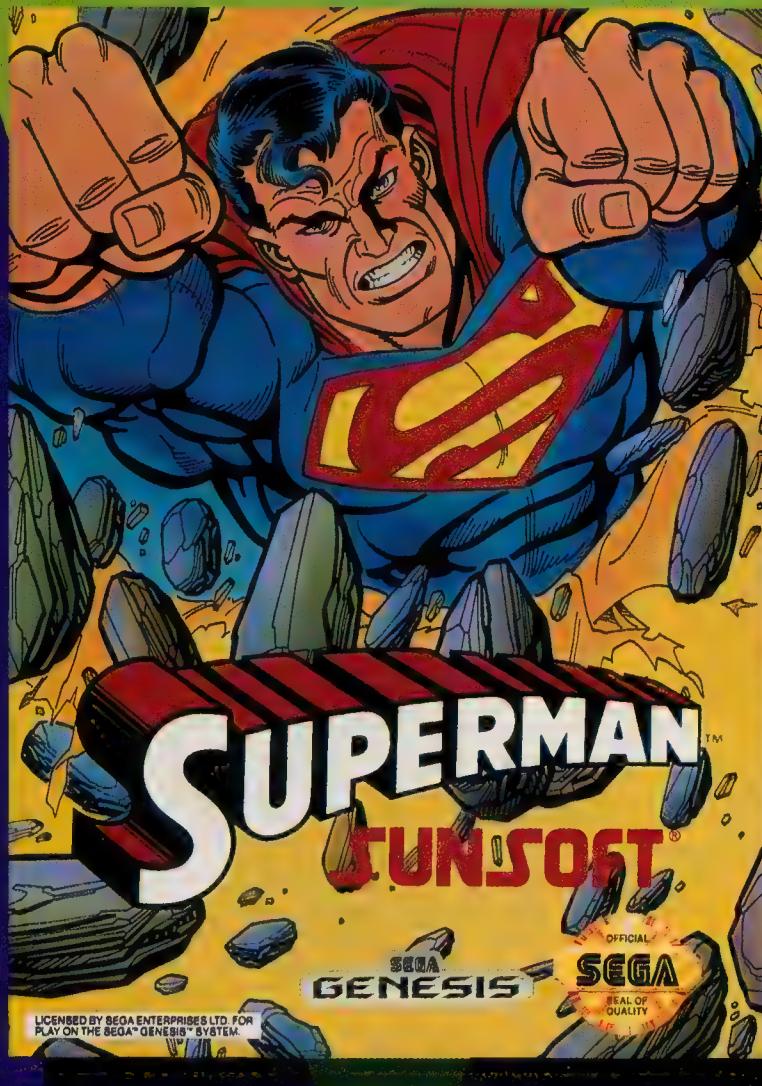
the best part: Your opponents spurt blood after you stab them. Super game play!

1) *Death Duel* (RazorSoft for the Genesis). And the winner is (drum roll...) *Death Duel*, which ushers in a new age of graphic violence. Characters are larger than in the above four games, so the violence is more vivid. Even better, you get to dismember opponents limb by limb! Start off by savaging a dragon opponent by blowing off its arms and head off, then finish off the helpless creature by blowing off its legs (a fountain of blood pumps out of the mangled limbs!). Level after level, you actually dismember each of your opponents in order to win. It's a shocking treat for gore fans (sorry, Mr. Vice President, different gore).

—Clifford Meth

ILLUSTRATION BY STEVE FIORILLA

KRYPTONITE NOT INCLUDED



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Past (Nintendo for the SNES) certainly doesn't disappoint. Graphically, the overhead 3-D perspective is a welcome change from the alternating flattop view and side-scrolling perspective of the last game, and the enemy creatures appear by the droves without flicker or slowdown. The soundtrack is gorgeous—each major section has its own theme. You don't expect strings in a video game, but their atmospheric effect is more than successful. What's truly great about this installment is how Link interacts with his environment: He can pick up and throw bushes and signs, light fire pots and even blast holes in walls. This one's a winner in all respects.

HONORABLE MENTION: *Soul Blazer* (Enix for the SNES) and *Prince of Persia* (Konami for the SNES).

BEST ADVENTURE VIDEO GAME

Just as you don't find *Zelda* or *Soul Blazer*-type games on the computer, adventure games are slow to come to video-game systems. So the clear winner in this under-populated field for Best Adventure Video Game is Turbo Technologies' *Loom* for the TG-16 with Super CD-ROM. A straightforward port by LucasArts of Brian Moriarty's original computer game, *Loom* is the story of the weaver Bobbin Threadbare, who must find the secret of his own power as well as the elders of the weavers' guild. Eschewing the standard inventory-based



system found in adventure games, everything in *Loom* is based on the player's ability to learn and cast magical spells in the form of verses of music. The music is where *Loom* really shines, as it proves itself to be one of the few games truly deserving CD format.

BEST ROLE-PLAYING VIDEO GAME

Cartridge-based role-playing games have learned the importance of a good story line much earlier than their computer counterparts.

Their own hurdle is learning how to provide the maximum in options and character variety with minimal bookkeeping and control hassles. *Dungeons & Dragons: Warriors of the Eternal Sun* (Sega for the Genesis) has efficient handling of the D&D rules and fast, varied play, making it the easy choice for the Best Role-Playing Video Game of 1992.



Players must work for the insane Duke Barrik as they explore a strange world looking for a way back to their own monster-infested home. Dungeons and overland encounters are plentiful and varied. Play is lightning-quick in the dungeons, and item manipulation is mercifully simple. Containing a healthy dose of traps and treasure without the impossible-to-find secrets that often ruin other RPGs, *Warriors* is the game that even D&D debunkers should look into.

HONORABLE MENTION: *Cosmic Fantasy 2* (Working Designs for the TurboGrafx-CD) and *Final Fantasy—Mystic Quest* (Square Soft for the SNES)

BEST SOUND IN A VIDEO GAME

Nestled in among more than 1,200 frames of animation, gallons of goo and goofier looking enemies than you'd find in a month of Saturday mornings, it

would be easy to ignore the sounds in *Mick & Mack as the Global Gladiators* (Virgin for the Genesis).

From the opening Virgin staff sing-along "Vir-gin" to the final "game over" organ, *Global Gladiators* is a delight to listen to. With this collection of bass-



heavy tunes, Tommy Tallarico has created a soundtrack that is less irritating and more funky than that playing in most dance clubs. But it's the individual sound effects that really stand out. Ever wonder what a man-eating plant sounds like when screaming in agony, or a snow creature shattering to pieces? Neither did we—but they can't be funnier than the way they sound in *Mick & Mack as the Global Gladiators*.

HONORABLE MENTION: *Super Star Wars* (JVC/LucasArts for the SNES) and *Alien³* (Arena for the Genesis)

BEST GRAPHICS IN A VIDEO GAME

Graphically, the first SNES releases were a bit disappointing. The endemically cute games simply could not show off the SNES's capabilities, and the violent cartridges tended to be so overcrowded with graphics that they were slow and hard to see. Then came *Contra III—The Alien Wars* (Konami for the SNES), VG&CE's pick for Best Graphics





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The Worst Games of 1992

Filling space with text about good games is easy because it's a pleasure to research. But to avoid giving the impression that 1992's software releases were uniformly excellent, we present the five worst video and computer games of 1992.

We could have selected a collection of poorly translated imports for outdated machines that even failed in Japan, and the dregs of shareware computer software. But, instead, we chose only "major" releases, the games that sit innocently on store shelves, begging you to waste your money on them.

Hold your nose, because here they are (in no particular order):

THE FIVE WORST VIDEO GAMES OF 1992

The Simpsons: Bartman Meets Radioactive Man (Acclaim for the NES)—

That's right, the same people

who released the wonderful *Bart's Nightmare* churned out this turkey. No one here would blame Matt Groening for forcing the programmers to write one thousand times on the chalkboard "I will not subvert good licenses with bad games."

Ghost Manor (TTI for the TG-16)—The hydrocephalic lead character jumps and jumps—that's it. The "Great Taste vs. Less Filling" battle doesn't compare to the "Too Stupid vs. Too Boring" shouting match this game inspires.

Jordan vs. Bird—One on One (Electronic Arts for the Game Boy)—A fine game if you like dribbling and jumping in lunar gravity. Also, it's the only cartridge game we know of that flashes a "please wait" message while the Game Boy tries to figure out the wretched programming.

Pit-Fighter (T+HQ for the SNES)—Itty-bitty "digitized" fighters seemingly slug it out in this coin-op translation. "Latin" speaker Dan Quayle would do a more competent job translating *Ovid* into Portuguese.

Basketbrawl (Atari for the Lynx)—A cheesy ripoff of *Arch Rivals*, *Basketbrawl* features glorified stick figures doing ballet-style

jumpkicks while trying to stuff balls into hoops—and knives into the competition. It almost makes *Bill Laimbeer's Combat Basketball* (a near-miss for this list) look good. Almost.

THE FIVE WORST COMPUTER GAMES OF 1992

Pit-Fighter (Domark)—It's the game that should have never left the arcades. As ugly as the SNES version, this game is completely unplayable as well.

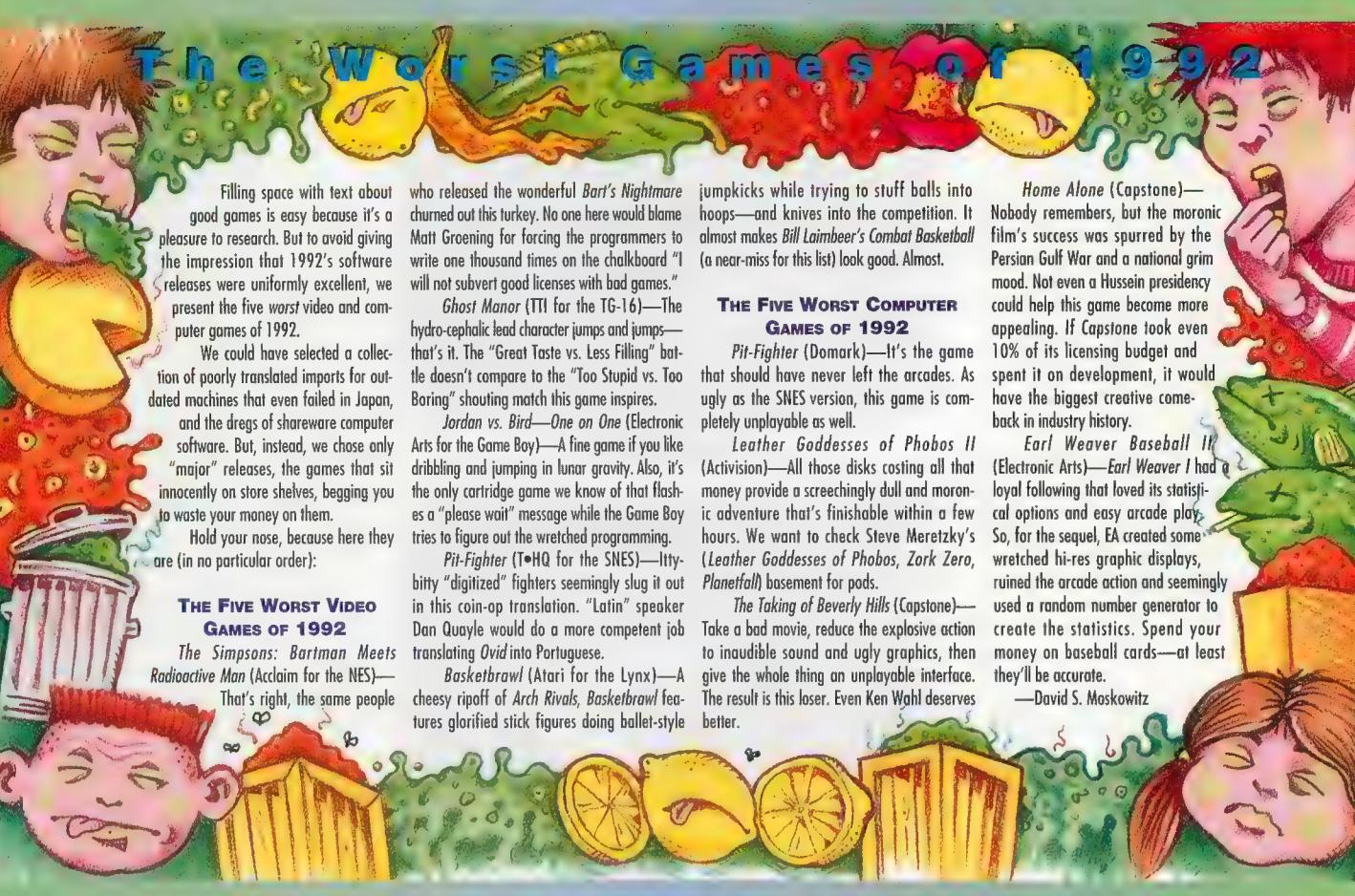
Leather Goddesses of Phobos II (Activision)—All those disks costing all that money provide a screechingly dull and moronic adventure that's finishable within a few hours. We want to check Steve Meretzky's (*Leather Goddesses of Phobos*, *Zork Zero*, *Planetfall*) basement for pods.

The Taking of Beverly Hills (Capstone)—Take a bad movie, reduce the explosive action to inaudible sound and ugly graphics, then give the whole thing an unplayable interface. The result is this loser. Even Ken Wahl deserves better.

Home Alone (Capstone)—Nobody remembers, but the moronic film's success was spurred by the Persian Gulf War and a national grim mood. Not even a Hussein presidency could help this game become more appealing. If Capstone took even 10% of its licensing budget and spent it on development, it would have the biggest creative comeback in industry history.

Earl Weaver Baseball II (Electronic Arts)—*Earl Weaver* I had a loyal following that loved its statistical options and easy arcade play. So, for the sequel, EA created some wretched hi-res graphic displays, ruined the arcade action and seemingly used a random number generator to create the statistics. Spend your money on baseball cards—at least they'll be accurate.

—David S. Moskowitz



in a Video Game. Set on a post-alien-invasion earth, *Contra III* boasts grim multiscaling backgrounds that make you wonder whether there was any point to saving the planet. While the SNES's Mode 7 had been used mostly to rotate and scale the title screen on other SNES titles, *Contra III* created entire levels that rotated around the player. All this in a screen that was never overly cluttered or slowed down, proving that Konami was capable of more on the new machine than *Gradius III*.

HONORABLE MENTION: *Super Star Wars* (JVC/LucasArts for the SNES) and *Sonic the Hedgehog 2* (Sega for the Genesis).

MOST INNOVATIVE VIDEO GAME

Cartridge and CD-ROM games have such a different assortment of strengths that this year we're giving the Most Innovative Video Game of the year award to one of each.

Unlike the Genesis, the SNES does not have many basketball simulations available, so Nintendo's *NCAA Basketball* for the SNES would stand out for that reason alone. But, while most hoops simulations simply have a static



camera tracking the action up and down the court, *NCAA* provides what even the best television coverage cannot: a focus on the ball at all times, always close enough and always at the best angle for play. This is easily the most impressive use of Mode 7 technology yet—just remember to take your motion-sickness pills before playing.

Most CD games are simply cartridges with long soundtracks, but Sega's own *Night Trap* for the Sega CD is probably the first game since *Sherlock Holmes, Consulting Detective* (NEC for the TG-CD) to show what a CD game can really be like. *Night Trap* challenges players to save a cast of teenage girls from a house

full of vampires in strange black suits. Featuring full-motion video, the game lets players simply watch the cast die or try to trap the vampires in different devices; it all depends on your ability to monitor all eight locations simultaneously. Not for the humorless or the easily harried.

HONORABLE MENTION: *Tecmo Cup Soccer* (Tecmo for the NES).

BEST COMPUTER GAMES OF THE YEAR

COMPUTER GAME OF THE YEAR

Computer games tend to be more varied than video games, so choosing the Computer Game of the Year is always the most difficult task for the VG&CE staff. Of the nominations coming from all of the free-lancers, associate editors and just about anyone else we trusted, one name kept appearing: *Ultima Underworld: The Stygian Abyss* (Origin), VG&CE's Computer Game of the Year.

First-person fantasy role-playing games have been around for years, but, while most send players on a step-by-step path on a square grid, *Ultima*



Underworld explorers glide in 360° travel. All dungeon detail automatically scales according to player perspective and proximity, creating the most realistic delving experience to date.

It takes more than pretty graphics to make a game of the year, and *Underworld* delivers with numerous quests and all of the magic, music and intrigue expected from an *Ultima* game.

HONORABLE MENTION: *Civilization* (MicroProse) and *Wolfenstein 3-D* (ID Software).

BEST SPORTS COMPUTER GAME

Baseball games generally need to be geared to two types of players: those who like to track hundreds of players' statistics throughout several seasons and a number of trades, and those who want to play baseball—hitting, pitching, fielding and managing.

With one- and two-player modes, Accolade's *Al Michaels Announces HardBall III* provides plenty of sports action, with controls allowing both variety and playability. Perhaps the best part of *HardBall III* (or at least its main marketing aspect) is the sampled speech of famed announcer Al Michaels throughout. Since the players are mostly fictional, the digitized speech refers to players by numbers



and not names, but this is a minor quibble in otherwise excellent play-by-play coverage. The only way Accolade could top this would be to get Vin Scully to narrate *HardBall IV*.

HONORABLE MENTION: *LINKS 386 Pro* (Access) and *Front Page Sports: Football* (Dynamix).

BEST ACTION COMPUTER GAME

For weeks after it arrived, ID's *Wolfenstein 3-D*—the Best Action Computer Game of the year—made the



continued on page 102

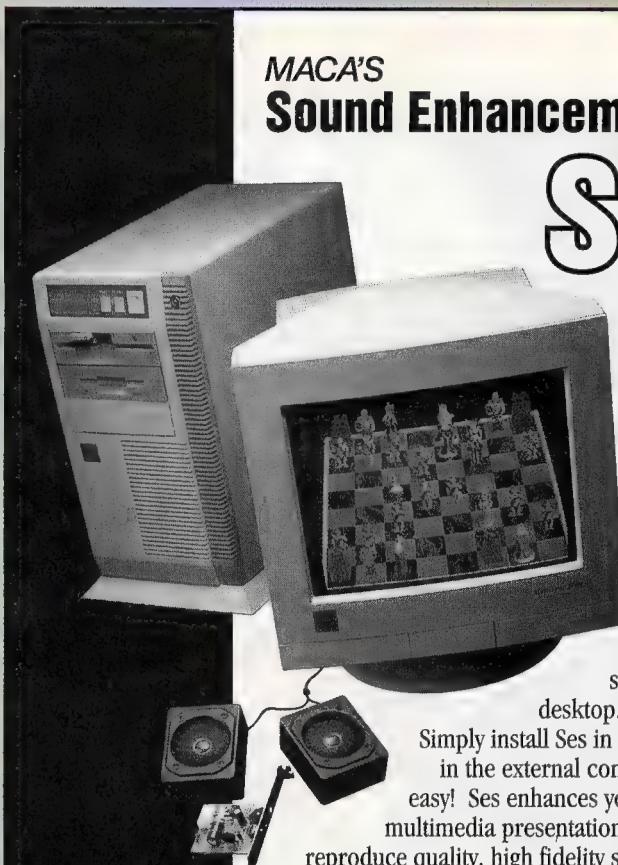
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A MATTER OF CHAOS, PART 1

21 Player's Guide to Dungeon Master



Deep down in the ancient corridors of a long-forgotten labyrinth lies one of the greatest challenges a group of adventurers has ever faced. Skeletons, mummies, demons and all manner of evil beasts roam the dank hallways, always on the lookout for some munchable flesh. But those with the guts and bravery to defeat the beasts will find treasures beyond imagining—gold, magic and fantastically powerful weapons. All may be won by those with a true spirit for adventuring. But don't forget the supreme master of evil, Chaos, who lurks somewhere in these cursed dungeons.

BY CLAYTON VALENTIN



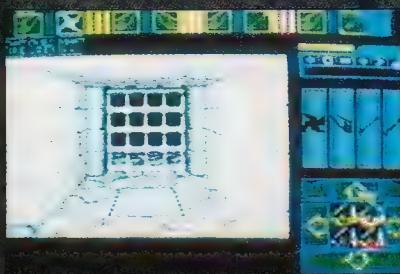
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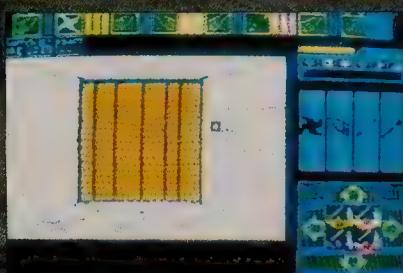
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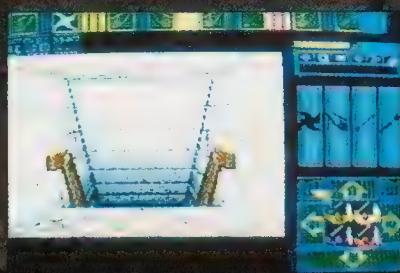
Your first task is to get together a strong party. Make sure you get a good mix of abilities. Strong fighters and magic users are especially important.



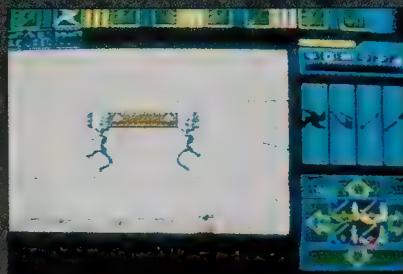
Once you've explored the Hall of Champions, find your way to this door. Stepping on the plate in the floor triggers the gate.



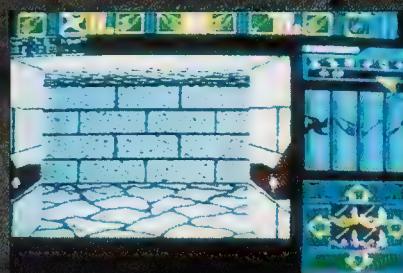
There are many ways to open doors. Some, like this one, have buttons. Others use levers or keys. Still others require some puzzle-solving in order to get them open.



After gathering all the goodies on Level 1, take these stairs down to Level 2.



As you explore, keep a sharp eye out for items on the floor. Not all items are as easy to see as this apple. Examine every inch of hallways for such valuable items as weapons, scrolls, coins and keys.



Level 2 is dark, so you'll need to light a torch or cast a light spell. The light spell, shown ready-to-go in this screen's spell box, is especially nice, since you won't have to fill a hand with a torch.



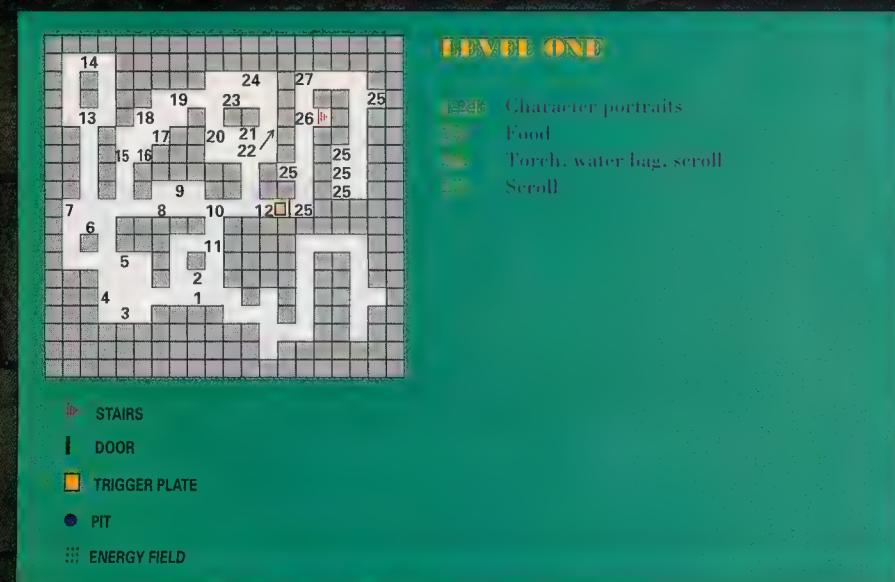
The loose brick in this wall hides an important secret. If you push the brick...



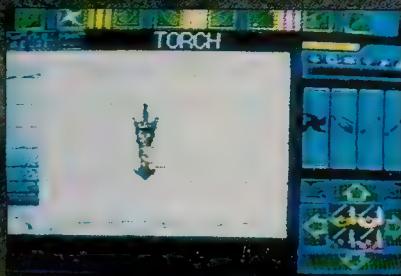
...you'll find a falchion, a powerful and badly needed weapon.



Ninja skills can be increased by throwing objects, but you don't have to throw objects at monsters to gain experience. Find yourself a wooden door and throw objects at it. The more you throw, the higher your ninja experience goes.



The clothing you'll find throughout the dungeon usually increases your defensive power when you put it on.



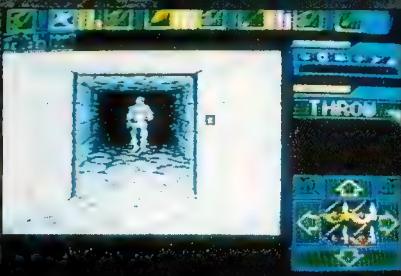
Pick up torches, too. You may have a magic user who can cast light spells, but what if something happens to him?



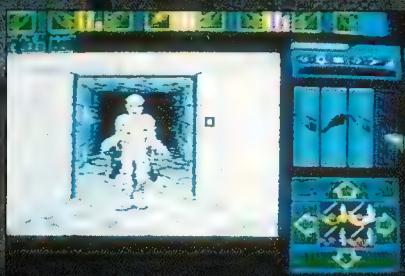
Water bags hold three portions of water. Keep your bags filled at the fountains you'll find.



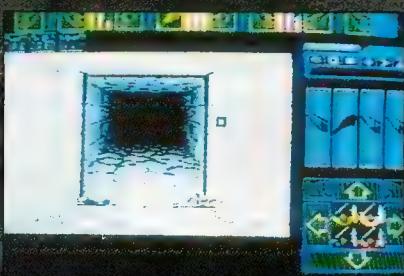
This fountain on this first level can restore life to dead adventurers.



You'll meet your first monsters on Level 2. Throw things at them when they're far away. If you do...



...you may be able to kill them before they get too close.



And remember to pick up any weapons you drop or throw. They won't be placed back in your inventory unless you do.



Keys are usually found on the floors, but are often hard to see. Can you see the gold key in this photo?



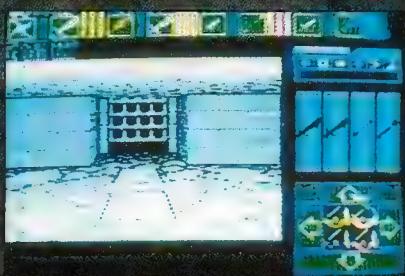
Whenever you come across fountains, slake your thirst and fill your water bags.



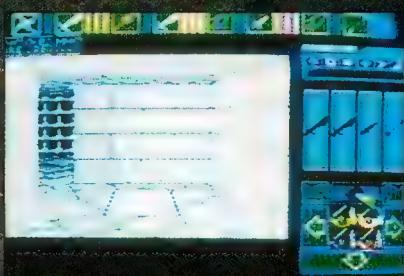
To get across this pit, all you must do is pull the lever on the wall to the right.



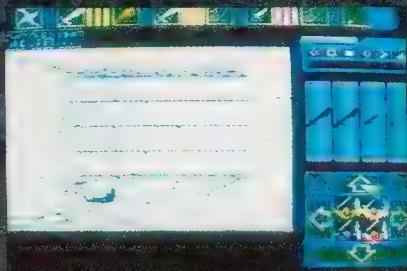
These strange creatures, known as screamers, are a source of food. After you kill them, be sure to pick up the screamer slices.



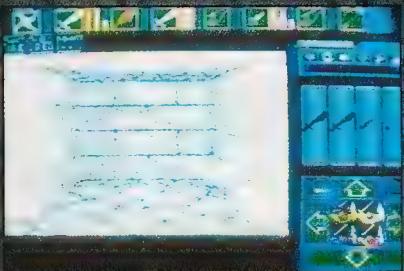
You'll need to step on these panels in the right order to open the two gates blocking the exit. Hint: If you get to the exit and one gate is still closed, you can step backward as well as forward.



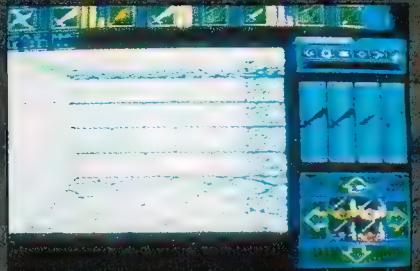
Hmm... This gate stays open only as long as you're standing on the plate in the floor. Maybe...



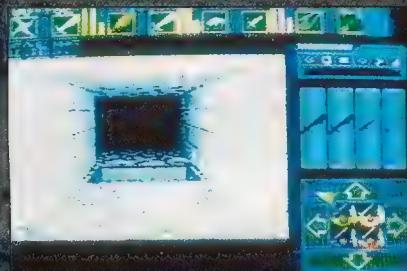
you can use this boulder to weight down the plate.



This strange energy field will take you for a ride if you step into it. When you do...



...you'll end up in this secret room, which contains several valuable items, not the least of which is another key.



...triggers this pit closed. You'll need to weight the plate down with something in order to get across.



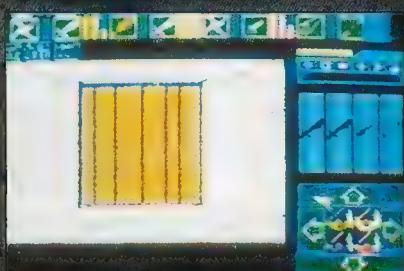
In a large room you'll find this button. It will open the door, but...



...don't leave the room until you've picked up this treasure trove of items. The flasks are especially important, since you need them to hold the results of some types of spells, such as healing spells.



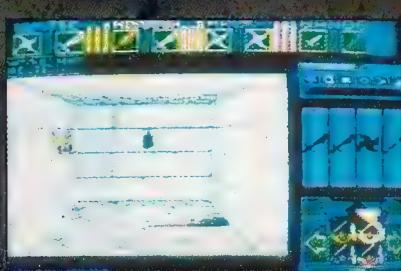
Throwing an object into this energy field will deactivate it.



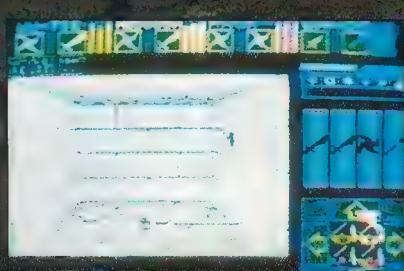
The only way through this door is to bash it open.



...and once you do, you can get this treasure chest, which is guarded by an energy field.



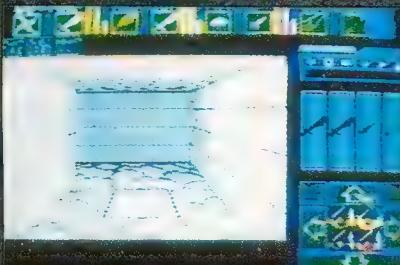
...which you'll find in the form of this lever a little farther down the hall and around the corner.



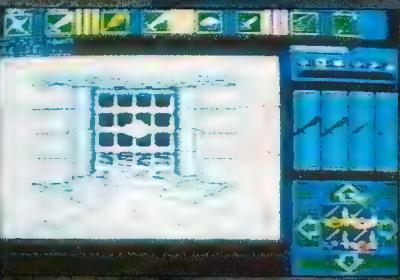
Once you get the cell open, you can grab this sword. You can also pull this lever, which reveals a secret room back where the other lever was.



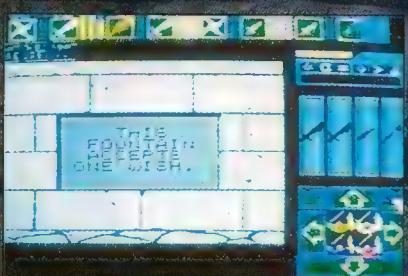
When you find that secret room...



This plate in the floor...



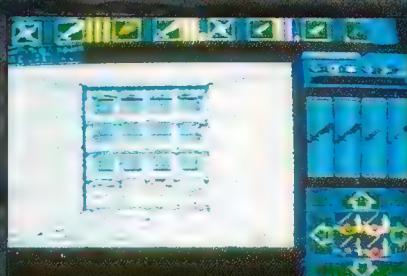
To open this gate, you must pull the levers located to the left and the right of the hallway.



Keep an eye out for inscriptions on the walls. They often provide helpful clues.



Throw a coin into this fountain to open the door in this hallway.



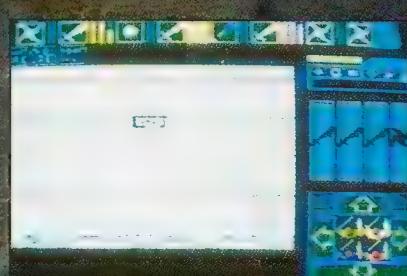
You won't be able to get into this locked cell until you discover its secret.



...you'll also find this blue magical box.



Finally! The stairs down to Level 3.



At the bottom of the stairs, pushing this loose brick...

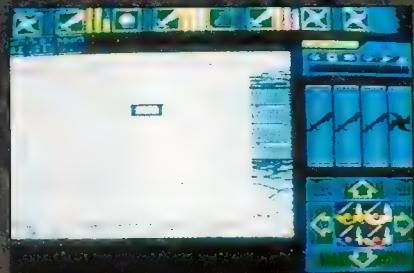


A: Press loose brick to open secret door.
 B: Good timing needed to get past the force field.
 C: Place something on trigger plate to hold pit open.
 D: Use silver coin to open door.
 E: Press button to open secret door.
 F: Press button to open secret hallway to the west.
 G: Throw heavy object into force field.
 H: Press button, then move backward quickly.
 I: Press this button to close all traps.
 J: These areas turn you in a different direction.

K: Press this button to open secret wall to the south.
 L: Use two gold coins to open door.
 M: Use Open Door spell, and then throw object on trigger plate.
 N: Use silver coin to open door.
 O: Button opens secret wall, which hides another secret button.
 P: Press buttons on walls to activate energy fields.
 Q: Hold mirror up to eye to open secret passage.
 R: Gold keys open these doors.

LEVEL 3

- 1: Clothing
- 2: Compass
- 3: Arrow
- 4: Food
- 5: Gold key
- 6: Gold key & helmet
- 7: Sling
- 8: Rabbit's foot
- 9: Blue gem & food
- 10: Arrow
- 11: Armor
- 12: Arrow
- 13: Arrow
- 14: Gold key & equipment
- 15: Silver coin
- 16: Chest
- 17: Leather pants
- 18: Ra key
- 19: Equipment
- 20: Sword & food
- 21: Equipment



will open a secret door.



You need to cast an Open Door spell on this door. Then you can toss something heavy onto the trigger plate you'll reveal, which will close the pit.



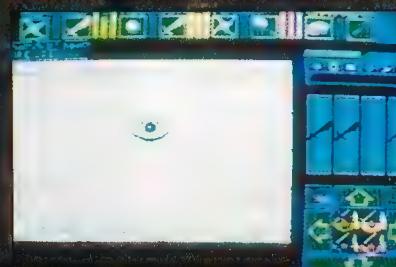
A coin will reveal a secret entrance to the east.



Inside the secret alcove, you'll find this button, which opens another secret door, southeast from here.



Beyond the door to the Chambers of the Guardian, you find some puzzling problems.



Hold the mirror you'll find in the chest up to the eye, and...



...a magical passage will open. But watch out for monsters!



In Level 3's main room, you can choose from many doors, each of which leads to new adventures. In the vault, for example...



...you need gold coins to open the doors, but...



you'd better have your weapons ready. This corridor has many guardians.



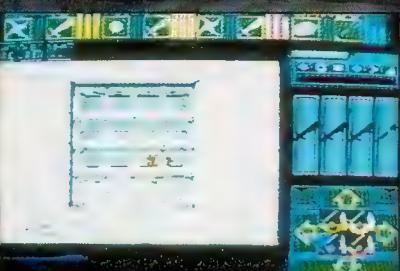
You need this silver coin, but the door to the right won't stay open unless you put something on the shelf to take the coin's place.



Here's where you need that silver coin, right around the corner from the shelf on which you found it.



In this chest, you'll find several coins and another magic box.



You need to get this treasure chest, so...



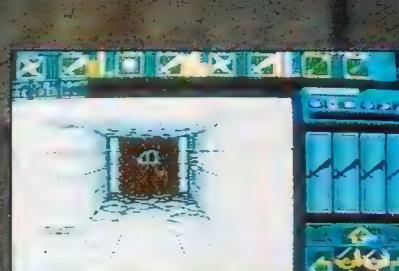
...press the buttons to activate the energy beams, which transfer the chest from one cell to another.



Eventually, the chest will be transported to the end of the corridor, where you can get it.



In The Room of the Gem...



...just as in all the other areas on Level 3, you'll face mysterious doors, tricky traps and always plenty of mystery. Good luck!

After looking back at VG&CE's December 1992 issue, I can't stop thinking about the comments made by guest columnist Takahiro Eguchi in our special edition of *Inside Gaming*. It's clear that the Game Boy is the only portable system to enjoy continued success in Japan, so what's going to keep this situation from repeating itself on these shores? Longer battery life? Lower prices of portable software? Original titles that can't be played on any of the full-sized systems? Any of the above would help, though none of the handheld machines appears to be in any immediate danger in this country. Even the Lynx—the least supported system of the "big three" portables—continues to be graced with one to three new titles each month, so let's keep our fingers crossed.

Hope your batteries are charged up, 'cause here we go...of course, in my case, I'll be waiting for the sun to come up so I can charge up the Solar Boy rechargeable Game Boy battery pack that Innovation Technologies sent us for testing. I'll let you know how long it takes—but, in the meantime, the middle of the night is the perfect time to write about this month's leadoff game, an eerie little number called....

Dracula—The Undead

ATARI

For the Atari Lynx (\$39.99)

SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

An atmospheric one-player thriller, *Dracula—The Undead* is a product of the U.K.'s Hand Made Software, which



BY
CHRIS BIENIEK

entertained Lynx owners last year with *Awesome Golf*. Switching genres hasn't affected Hand Made's standard of quality; this is a beautiful, unique tale of horror presented as an adventure game of exploration and puzzle-solving.

Though it's not directly related to the recent Francis Ford Coppola epic, the game does mirror the film in the sense that it emphasizes close ties to Bram Stoker's original novel. In fact, Stoker appears on the screen to introduce the game himself. He frequently pops up during the adventure to read passages from the book, flipping pages as he sits near a flickering fireplace—and he actually *looks* like the photographs of Stoker that I've seen.

As Jonathan Harker, a guest in the castle of Count Dracula, you must explore rooms and find objects to help you escape before the Count or his three brides can feast on your blood. The Harker character is nicely animated, moving in and out of each scene through effective use of scaling; he grows larger as he steps closer to you. Complemented

by appropriately eerie music, the game's biggest thrills come from not knowing what might happen next. Each time you walk through a door or look out a window, you might discover a new object, find a hidden passageway or witness one of the game's chilling intermissions.

Punctuating the atmospheric story line is the unsettling look of the graphics, which are displayed entirely in sepia tones and shadows. The nearly colorless presentation gives *Dracula—The Undead* the feel of an old photograph come to life; indeed, the game opens with a crisply digitized shot of Dracula's piercing eyes. (Yes, Hammer horror fans, they are the eyes of actor Christopher Lee.) Certain rooms can only be reached by—gasp!—climbing out a window and clinging to the castle's outer wall, and there are some terrific lighting effects in the scenes where Jonathan carries a lantern into the catacombs where Dracula sleeps.

Aside from a few minor complaints, namely, an occasionally sluggish interface and the lack of a password or game-save feature, *Dracula—The Undead* held only one major disappointment for me: It's a two-megabit game that had originally been announced as the first four-meg Lynx title. (That distinction has since been inherited by the upcoming *Pit-Fighter*.) Regardless of memory size, *Dracula—The Undead* is still a topnotch Lynx cart that's as original as it is entertaining.

Atari Corporation
1196 Borregas Ave.
Sunnyvale, CA 94089
(408) 745-2000

The Ren & Stimpy Show—Space Cadet Adventures

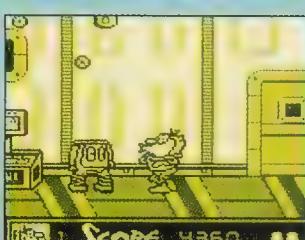
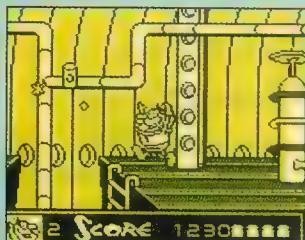
T•HQ

For the Nintendo
Game Boy (N/A)

SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Created by animator John Kricfalusi, Nickelodeon's *The Ren & Stimpy Show* is an obvious example of a license that will sell a video game regardless of what the actual game is like. In an interesting and unique approach, T•HQ's *The Ren & Stimpy Show—Space Cadet Adventures*





Show—*Space Cadet Adventures* is a run-and-jump contest that borrows the jazzy sci-fi theme of the “Space Madness” and “Marooned” episodes from the show’s first season.

If the game offers one major surprise it’s the snippets of digitized speech that pop up during the action. A rare treat on the Game Boy, the voices of Kricfalusi (Ren) and Billy West (Stimpy) can be heard scratching out the catchphrases “You eeediot!” and “Oh, joy!” respectively, as well as exclaiming each other’s name when 1-ups are found.

As a game player, I wasn’t too thrilled with *The Ren & Stimpy Show—Space Cadet Adventures*. Imagineering Inc.—the game’s developer—isn’t exactly known for creating brilliant, highly playable games, and T·HQ itself occasionally shows more concern about the quality of a license than about the quality of the game behind the popular name. Two serious flaws are in evidence here: an overabundance of dark, detailed backgrounds that all but camouflage enemies and harmful objects on the Game Boy, and a sterile, uninteresting jump-and-shoot play mechanic.

As a *Ren & Stimpy* fan, I didn’t find much cause for excitement, either. The animated introduction and intermission sequences are a real treat, but, in the end, the Game Boy just can’t do the characters justice. The rattling bongos in the TV show’s theme are

reduced to clicking sounds here, like the striking of dozens of matches. And the old-hat game play...it’s like *Super Mario Bros.* with hairballs and powdered toast. Not that I expected the game to consist of Ren smacking George Liquor with an oar, I was just hoping for something a bit more original.

Thankfully, all is not lost. Though the characters’ movements are unrealistic, they do respond to your control-pad commands fairly well. There are some nice graphic details, too; fans of the show will get a chuckle out of the recurring Logs, as well as the bonus rounds featuring Muddy Mudskipper (“Okay, ya lousy bum!” he exhorts from the screen). Not bad, but, unless T·HQ’s upcoming NES and Super NES *Ren & Stimpy* games offer a completely different range of scenarios, this one should be considered a steppingstone to bigger and better things.

T·HQ Software Inc.
5000 N. Parkway Calabasas
Suite 107
Calabasas, CA 91302
(818) 591-1310

Super Space Invaders

DOMARK

For the Sega Game Gear (\$37.95)

SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Did I hear someone say that *Space Invaders* was dated? It’s true; the monotonous “plop-plop-plop” of the original aliens is not much of a match for the graphic sizzle and high-speed action of today’s video games. That’s why Domark (and Tiertex Ltd., who converted the game) wisely decided to

add new features to this Game Gear version of the classic shoot-em-up; the “super” tag is entirely appropriate.

For starters, the original side-by-side alien pattern exists for just one attack wave. After that, all hell breaks loose as veteran *Space Invaders* fans become confounded by new formations, colorful scrolling backgrounds, special weapons that drop from the “mother ship” at the top of the screen, invaders that split in two or double in size when they’re hit, meteor showers and “Guardian” boss characters. There’s also a screamingly funny “Cattle Mutilation Round,” a bonus level in which you must fight off waves of flying saucers that swoop down to kidnap little cows that scurry around at the bottom of the screen.

Though there’s no music during the game, there is a snappy title-screen theme, and the sound effects inspire nostalgia without sounding cheesy. Graphics are extremely good for the Game Gear; the backgrounds are clear and atmospheric, and there’s a lot of variety in the invaders’ appearances. Look for hidden levels and a two-player cooperative mode, too.

The only obvious feature that’s missing from *Super Space Invaders* is the row of bunker-like barriers that players could hide behind. Otherwise, it’s a wonderfully executed tribute to a classic game—one of the most truly memorable video games of all time. As a bonus, the instruction



manual includes a well-written two-page essay on the history of the game and the man who created it. His name is Toshihiro Nishikado...and would you believe he's now a *Tetris* fan?

Domark, distributed by Tengen Inc.
675 Sycamore Drive
Milpitas, CA 95035
(408) 473-9400

Tumblepop

DATA EAST

For the Nintendo Game Boy (\$27.95)

SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Even regular arcade inhabitants may have missed the coin-op version of *Tumblepop*—it took me weeks to track one down, and even then it was hard to reach because it was standing directly across from a *Street Fighter II* machine. I felt uncomfortable squeezing through a crowd of Guile wannabes just to reach this "kids game," but all was forgotten when I discovered that *Tumblepop* is a real gem. It's an action/strategy platform game, not unlike Taito's *Bub-*

ble Bobble/Rainbow Islands/Parasol Stars trilogy, but it's a much larger game with more to offer—and the Game Boy version keeps most of its features intact.

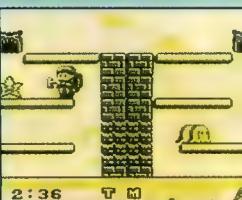
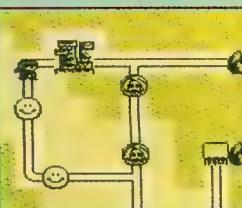
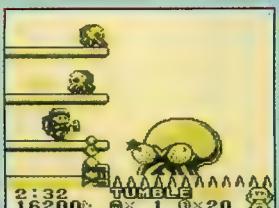
As a big roundheaded

Ghostbusters type of character, you must make your way around the *Tumblepop* world of the year 2018, trapping strange beasties with your "vacculator" and spitting them out. You'll move around map screens, deciding which areas of the game to conquer first, then you'll enter a series of sub-games in which you jump around and trap the aforementioned enemies. Loads of power-ups are available; in fact, some type of item always appears each time your vacculator spits out a creature.

Tumblepop is cute and fun to play, but its most impressive feature is its size. Consider this: The *Tumblepop* world is split into two areas. Each area contains

four buildings, and each building holds an average of nine playfields, two bonus areas and a boss character battle. If you pick up enough letters to spell the word "Tumblepop," you'll enter another bonus stage. Factor in a somewhat frustrating feature that hides the "inner sanctum" of the final Mad Scientist boss until you've defeated each area twice, and you have got a very long game on your hands.

As if that's not enough, many of the playfields scroll in four directions, "wrapping around" when you reach



the edges so that the rooms appear incredibly large at first glance. There's also a "construction mode" that allows you to design your own playfields (we're really getting into the realm of infinite play value here) and even a competitive two-player mode. Thankfully, a password system is included.

A great value for your gaming dollar, *Tumblepop* shines on the portable screen. According to a source at Data East, it's not expected to appear on any other game system in the future—which is another reason to seek this one out.

Data East USA Inc.
1850 Little Orchard St.
San Jose, CA 95125
(408) 286-7080

Regarding Innovation's Solar Boy...well, I got tired of waiting, and, after 6½ hours of charging its solar cells in direct sunlight, I sat down to play *Tumblepop*. Almost an hour later, it fizzled out. I have mixed feelings about this peripheral—I know it can last for several hours on a full charge (up to eight, according to the manufacturer), but it takes far too long to get to that point. I absolutely love the idea of a battery pack that can be recharged for free, but this one might only be useful for someone who plays with the Game Boy just once a week. Still, it's a great idea, and I strongly encourage Innovation to continue to live up to its name.

Reader feedback to this column is always appreciated. Send your comments and suggestions to: VideoGames & Computer Entertainment, Attn: *Gaming on the Go*, 9171 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 300, Beverly Hills, CA 90210. Computer owners with access to the DELPHI information service can also contact me via electronic mail sent to user name VGCHRIS, or stop by the "World of Video Games" special interest group and drop me a note in the public forum. 

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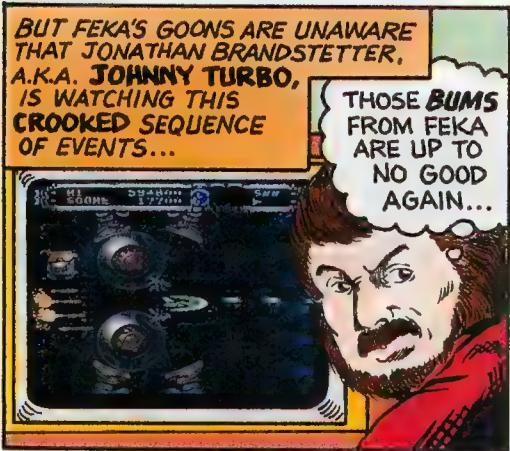
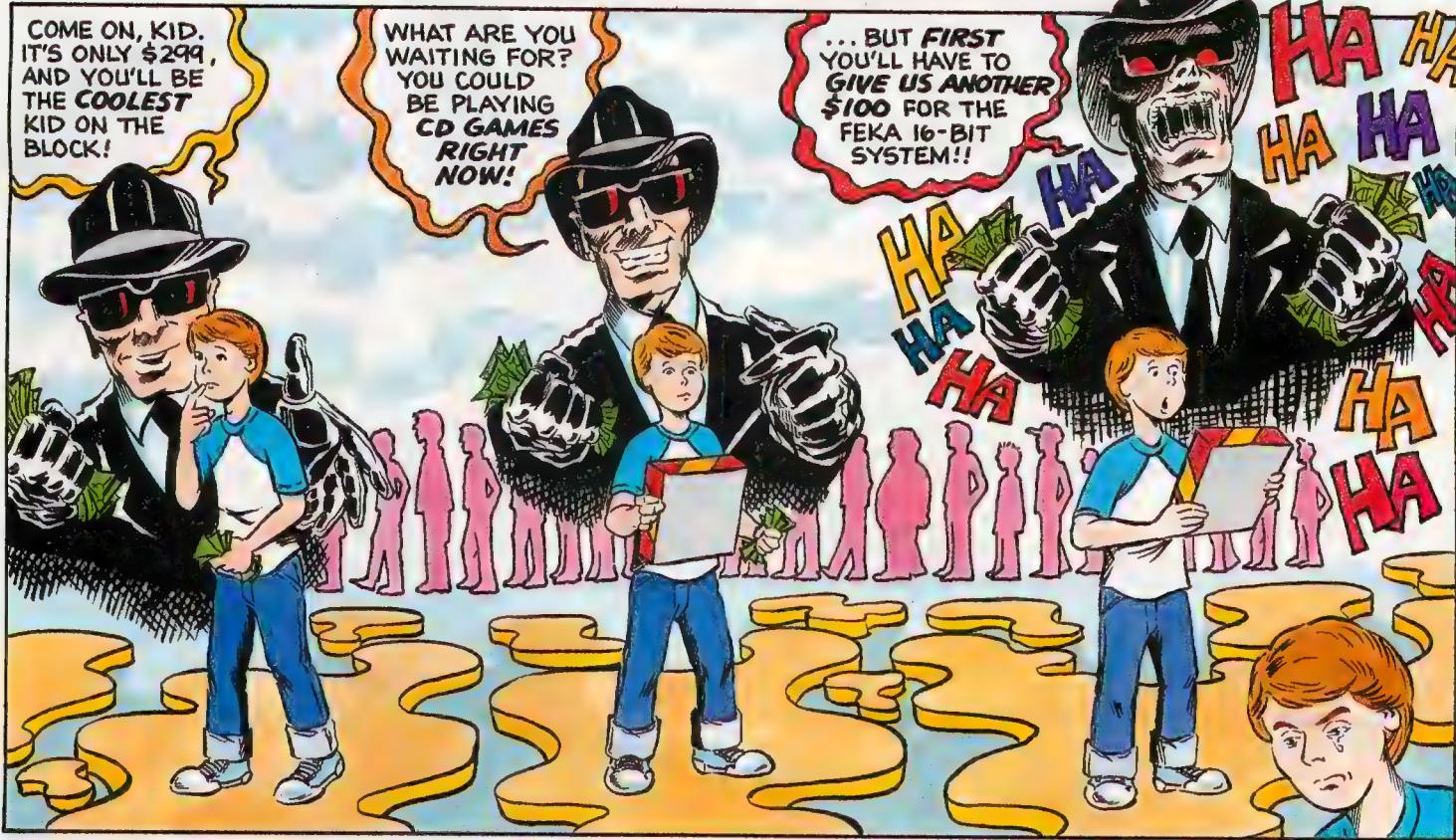


ON THE OUTSKIRTS
OF TOWN--



AT THE HOME OF COMPUTER EXPERT JONATHAN BRANDSTETTER, OUR HERO DISCOVERS SOME INTERESTING NEWS ABOUT FEKA...







Lords Of Thunder



Mysterious undersea caverns, seven levels of 3D scrolling scenery, and a collection of insect-like bosses that will make your eyes bug out. All in all, this CD shooter will give you faith in the Lord.

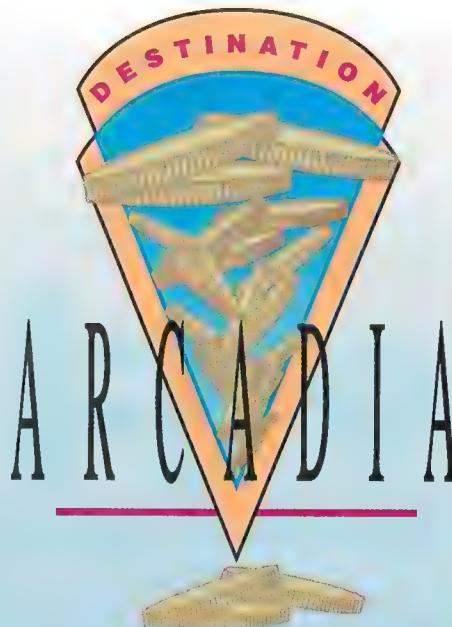
We are also very interested in your opinions and comments.

Please write us at:
Johnny Turbo Comments
Turbo Technologies, Inc.
6701 Center Drive West, Suite 500
Los Angeles, CA 90045



Okay, you've survived a round or two against the computer, and maybe even a human opponent. The machine commands "FINISH HIM" as your opponent wavers unsteadily from the punishment you just dished out. You punch him, knocking him to the ground and winning the round. But, instead of cheering, the crowd around you starts laughing and calling you "dweeb" for being too lame to do the fatality. "Fatality?" you ask, but the swell of laughter drowns out your question. Enraged by your dweebness, the angry mob lifts you from the ground and rushes you to the mall bathroom, where they dunk you in the toilet repeatedly.

This frightening scenario is being played out every day in at least one mall somewhere in this universe. You could be next. To stop the madness, we at VG&CE have compiled this handbook outlining the maneuvers necessary to successfully execute the "Fatals" or "Fatality" for each character in Midway's incredible fighting game *Mortal Kombat*. Each successful fatality maneuver will net you 100,000 points and save you from the terror-dubbed "dweeb dunking." Best of luck. Let's get started....



THE SECRETS OF MORTAL KOMBAT

BY
VICTOR IRELAND

EXPLANATION OF TERMS

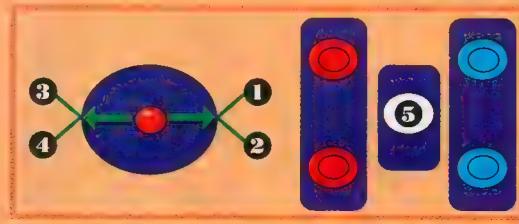


In all cases, the fatality moves are dependent upon which way your character is facing. That is why we won't use "left" or "right," but rather "toward" and "away." The joystick illustrations assume your opponent is on your right. If he is on your left, reverse the joystick motions.

Sonya

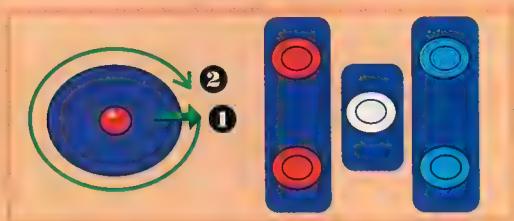
Let's start with the easy maneuvers first. Sonya's fatality, dubbed "Death Kiss," requires that you stand within a few inches of the character she is finishing. As you complete the maneuvers, the screen will darken and she will blow a fireball that will ignite her opponent, torching him into dust and bones.

To do this maneuver, you must tap toward twice, away twice, then press **BLOCK**.



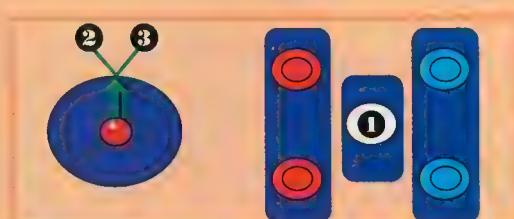
Liu-Kang

Liu-Kang's fatality maneuver, dubbed "Chop Suey," is also relatively simple. To do it, you must stand moderately close and rotate the joystick 360° away from your opponent. You may want to continue rotating the joystick until it happens. You will notice that the screen does not turn dark on Liu-Kang's fatal. The programmer of *Mortal Kombat*, Ed Boon, explains that this is because Liu-Kang is the "good guy" of *Mortal Kombat* and doesn't draw his powers from the dark side.



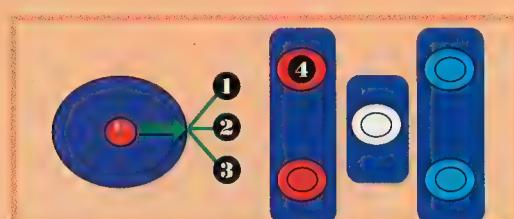
Scorpion

Scorp must be a long-lost relative of Sonya, because his fatal, dubbed "Blowtorch," is very similar to hers. To do this maneuver, you must be within a few inches of your opponent. Hold **BLOCK** as you tap up twice. Scorpion will warm his opponent with a charming parlor trick you should never try at home.



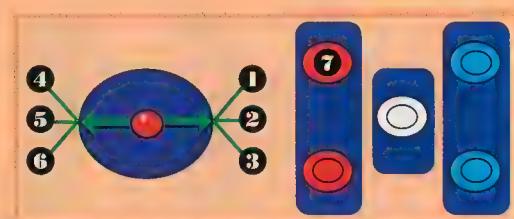
Cage

We're getting a little harder now, because Cage's fatal ("Heads Off to You") requires that you pay closer attention to your distance from your opponent. In order to do Cage's fatality move, you must be very close, tap toward three times, then hit **HIGH PUNCH**. Your opponent will get a nice, final bird's-eye view of the combat grounds.



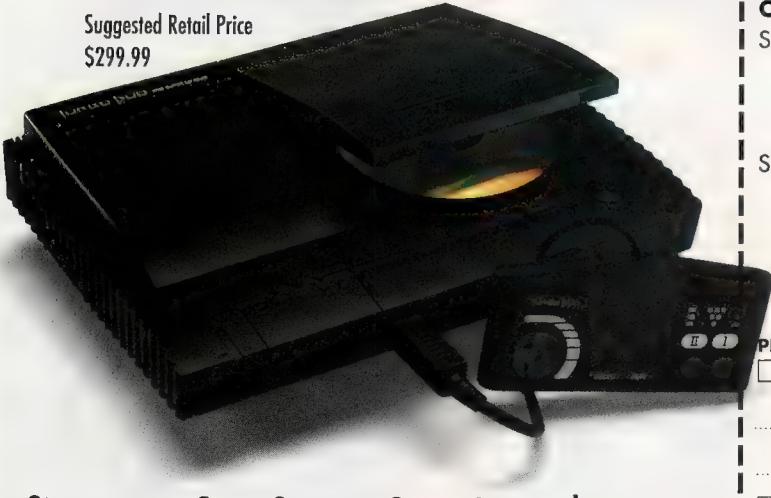
Raiden

The Lightning god's fatality move might be shocking to some—especially to your opponent. To do this one, you'll have to be close to your opponent, then press toward three times, away three times, then **HIGH PUNCH**. You can yell along with Raiden if you want, but, if you do, you might get dweeb dunked *despite* performing this fatality flawlessly.



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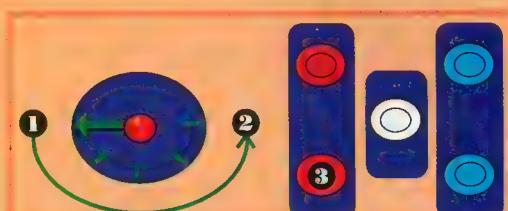
Sub-Zero

Sub-Zero's fatality ("Spinal Tap") proves that he has more than a black belt—there's a chiropractic degree lurking in his past. To "adjust" the spine of your opponent, position Sub-Zero very close and *roll* the joystick from down to down/toward (diagonal down) to toward then hit **HIGH PUNCH**. As the vertebrae of your opponent fall into line, you can state, "That'll be \$35, sir."



Kano

Kano's fatality move is perhaps the most graphic in the game. It's a pretty safe bet that there's Inca blood flowin' through his veins. To do his fatality and see for yourself, you must be close to your opponent, then roll the joystick from away through down to toward then hit **LOW PUNCH**.



COOL TRICK

On machines that have a Version 2 or earlier ROM, you can win every time playing against the computer's Raiden by sweeping him repeatedly. Just hold away and keep pressing Low Kick. If Raiden doesn't fall for this cheap trick, you've got a machine that has a Revision 3 or 4 ROM (the latest, installed in about 60% of the machines), and can go "reptile" hunting!

Thanks go to the *Mortal Kombat* crew at Williams for their help. Also, thanks go to the people at Gold Mine Arcade in Redding, California, for their invaluable assistance on this feature. *Mortal Kombat* is featured at all Gold Mine and Tilt arcades.

Reptile

Ed Boon, programmer of *Mortal Kombat* and cool guy that he is, thought it would be neat to "hide" a character in the game he programmed, like the fictitious "Sheng Long"—but this time, make him *really* exist. His goal was to make it very hard, but not impossible, to get to this guy on-screen. Reptile was the manifestation of this idea.

Available only on Revision 3 or 4 machines (see Cool Trick, above, for how to tell what revision machine you have), Reptile lurks among the spikes and decapitated heads of The Pit. Since he is nearly as powerful as Shang Tsung, and has mastered all the moves of Scorpion and Sub-Zero, he will only challenge players who have mastered the game.

To make him appear, you must:

- 1) Win every round leading up to the Pit stage.
- 2) On the Pit stage, *never* use **BLOCK** (except when executing a fatality move that uses block).
- 3) On the Pit stage, get a double flawless victory—yes, that means *never* get hit.
- 4) On the Pit stage, successfully do the fatality.

If you can do all of this, the green ninja master dubbed Reptile awaits you on the floor of The Pit. A player who can successfully defeat Reptile will be rewarded with 10,000,000 points!



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VG&CE offices sound like a World War II flick. A constant barrage of gunfire, screaming wounded and shouts of *achtung!* filled the air—and that was just the editors fighting over who got to play next. This brutally violent update of one of the all-time classic Apple II-era computer games is fast-paced, loud and really bloody. With SS, zombies, German shepherds and all of the goose-stepping soldiers you could want, frankly, we were afraid to give the award to anyone else.

HONORABLE MENTION: *Gods* (Konami) and *Shadow of the Beast 3* (Psygnosis).



first glance. If nothing else, you might think, the Super VGA graphics make the playing pieces more discernible than any cardboard chips.

But what makes *V for Victory* outstanding is the optional amount of player control. Those who simply want to stand on the battlefield and yell "Charge!" can set their forces on autopilot and let the "staff assistant" handle all of the dirty work.

With additional scenario packs, as well as a spin-off set in the modern day Persian Gulf, Three-Sixty has established its role among the strategic elite.

HONORABLE MENTION: *Civilization* (MicroProse) and *The Incredible Machine* (Dynamix).

BEST ACTION-STRATEGY COMPUTER GAME

The problem with too many strategy games is they let mathematical functions do all of the fighting. This wasn't true in Accolade's original *Star Control* and it certainly doesn't apply to *Star Control II*. In the sequel, the player is the last free human starship commander, who has returned to Earth from a stranded colony, only to find beloved Terra enslaved by the Ur-Quan. With the aid of a single starbase, the gamer must rebuild a fleet, and this requires scour-



ing planets all over the galaxy for minerals and life-forms.

All the rare elements in the universe won't help the humans if their leader can't master the arcade battle sequences. Besides giant caterpillars and hairless apes, *Star Control II* features a dozen different races—many of which wouldn't mind blasting you to atoms. Fortunately, some feel the same about the evil Ur-Quan, so remember that diplomatic tact counts almost as much as arcade and strategic skills.

HONORABLE MENTION: *Out of This World* (Interplay) and *Theatre of War* (Three-Sixty).

BEST ADVENTURE COMPUTER GAME

Guybrush Threepwood may have blown the pirate LeChuck into a billion pieces at the end of *The Secret of Monkey Island* (LucasArts), but a good villain—like a great design team—rarely stays silent for long. Ron Gilbert's maniacal Caribbean creations are back in the Best Computer Adventure Game of the year, *LeChuck's Revenge—Monkey Island 2*.



Brought back to life in his still-wriggling beard, LeChuck looks and smells even worse than he did the last time he terrorized trade in the West Indies. Not only do the inhabitants of Scabb Island refuse to give Threepwood any respect for his accomplishments, the pirate can't even *buy* any since he loses his fortune within the first five minutes of play.

LeChuck's Revenge has all of the humor, violence and bodily fluids one has come to expect from Ron Gilbert. With all this and a puzzle-light mode for beginners, it's more fun than the island spitting competition. Yes, 1992 was a good year for humor: Check out the Honorable Mention awards for more graphic laughs.

continued on page 105

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Please circle all entries that apply.

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HONORABLE MENTION: *Indiana Jones and the Fate of Atlantis* (LucasArts) and *Rex Nebular and the Cosmic Gender Bender* (MicroProse).

BEST ROLE-PLAYING COMPUTER GAME

For the last several years, the *Ultima*, *Might & Magic* and *Magic Candle* series and all of the *AD&D* games came very close to obscuring any memories of Sir-Tech's legendary *Wizardry* series. Not anymore. This year's Best Role-Playing Computer Game, *Wizardry: Crusaders of the Dark Savant*, delivers everything it promised in our preview, and so much more. With three separate entry points to the game, *Wizardry* is finally out of the dungeon.



Lost Guardia is barely large enough to contain all of the races, controversy, intrigue and science-fiction-flavored adventure David W. Bradley has created. Sci-fi? That's right, anyone wanting to kill mad dogs and orcs should go elsewhere. These star-spawned races will occasionally talk, but are much better in combat. Dozens of spells, 11 races and 14 classes should keep the fantasy fans happy—and, in case anyone exhausts this adventure, it's only the first in a planned trilogy.

HONORABLE MENTION: *Ultima Underworld: The Stygian Abyss* (Origin) and *Might & Magic: Clouds of Xeen* (New World Computing).

BEST SOUND IN A COMPUTER GAME

Frank Herbert's *Dune* didn't do too well at the box office, but the film's instrumental soundtrack was far better than anyone could expect out of the ballad-heavy Toto. So, while the band had nothing to do with this game, it's somehow appropriate that Virgin's *Dune* earns VG&CE's award for Best Sound in a



Computer Game. From the dark, foreboding tones accompanying the palace intrigue to the understated melodies that play during ornithopter trips across the shifting sands of Arrakis, Stephen Picq's soundtrack is always appropriate. One VG&CE nominator said that the music was "so good, you didn't notice it was there," and, considering the soothing yet unsettling nature of the sounds, Cryo should take that apparent contradiction as a compliment.

HONORABLE MENTION: *Ultima Underworld: The Stygian Abyss* (Origin) and *Mantis XF5700 Experimental Fighter* (MicroProse).

BEST GRAPHICS IN A COMPUTER GAME

At first, *LINKS 386 Pro* doesn't look that impressive—it's not too hard to draw a field of green after all. But this impression fades the moment the golfer takes his first swing. No blurred or fuzzy digitizing here; this looks just like full-motion video.



LINKS 386 Pro really starts to shine in its special features: Windows can be arbitrarily added or removed and the entire screen can be rearranged to suit a player's preference. Overhead shots can be zoomed in and out depending on how much of the course a player wants to see, and just about everything that could be

rotated will be. For those special shots that are beautiful for more than the graphics, *LINKS* provides an instant replay to watch them again and again.

HONORABLE MENTION: *Legend of Kyrandia* (Virgin) and *Ultima Underworld: The Stygian Abyss* (Origin).

MOST INNOVATIVE COMPUTER GAME

The cost of developing computer games is rising exponentially, so it logically should take someone with the budget of Electronic Arts, Virgin or MicroProse to come up with something truly innovative. Well, computers are logical, but the world isn't, as shown by the Most Innovative Computer Game of the year, ID Software's *Wolfenstein 3-D*.



This first-person perspective game leads players through a Teutonic castle with such speed and ease that any spectators not controlling the action risk seasickness. Do you have an old, slow machine? No problem: Simply reduce the window size, and the program adjusts to keep all of the detail in the smaller space, speeding up the action. ID is starting to license the engine to other game developers, but the superior skill of the game's original creative staff is clear, as the licensees haven't quite learned how to prevent the screen from turning into a splattered mess of giant pixels. The marketing of *Wolfenstein* is also innovative: The game is shareware, and the complete version must be ordered directly from Apogee. No distribution to stores. No advertising. The only things selling this game are its strengths and a horde of dumbstruck journalists who keep throwing attention and awards at the game.

HONORABLE MENTION: *Comanche: Maximum Overkill* (NovaLogic) *A-Train* (Maxis).

COMPUTER

GAME REVIEWS FIRST LOOK

Ultima VII Part 2: The Serpent Isle

ORIGIN

Version Previewed: IBM PC

The Guardian may have been defeated at the end of *Ultima VII*, but Britannia was far from peaceful. Eighteen months later, the land is plagued by mysterious storms, and Iolo's wife, Gwenno, is still missing, as is the fellowship's leader, Batlin.

In fact, ten years of *Ultima* games have left a lot of questions: Why did continents vanish after Mondain's death in *Ultima I*? And, more importantly, what happened to the Lands of Danger and Despair as they became the Serpent Isle?

Ultima VII Part 2: The Serpent Isle will lead the Avatar and his companions on a new quest to answer these questions and confront the Guardian's latest strike against the world: the release of the Banes of Chaos.

While *Serpent Isle* has made a greater attempt to link itself with *Ultima*'s past than recent installments, the technology is geared toward the future. *Serpent Isle* will feature larger, more detailed character portraits, new terrain (including snow, ice and six-foot-tall grass) and new magical spells.

Warren Spector (*Ultima Underworld: The Stygian Abyss*)



Wing Commander: The Secret Missions II is the producer of *Serpent Isle* and has enlisted his former colleague at Steve Jackson Games, Bill Armintrout, as head writer and project leader. Armintrout's game writing has earned him a spot in the Science Fiction Writers Association, a rare honor earned by very few game-based writers, including Marc Miller (*MegaTraveller*).



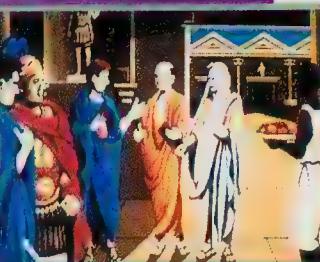
Caesar

IMPRESSIONS

Version Previewed: IBM PC

Julius Caesar may have conquered Europe and destroyed the Roman Republic, but it was his nephew Augustus who really got the empire going. It's this fledgling empire that *Caesar* players must develop a successful province for.

Starting with a forum, players must build waterways, houses, marketplaces, arenas and anything else that will help develop a taxpaying populace.



In addition to building and conquering, wannabe proconsuls must handle all of the necessary paperwork to keep the Emperor appeased and the slaves at least surviving, if not thriving. These financial decisions are anything but a chore on the cleanly done point-



and-click menus. Taxes too high? Entertainment too sparse? How about food and water? Any of these problems will incite your own citizens to riot and destroy your expensive stone edifices.

How well are you treating your slaves? They're not as important as citizens, but they are your soldiers, firemen and construction workers. In cases this isn't enough, your province is surrounded by barbarians more than ready to take advantage of your "soft" city-bred inhabitants.



CAESAR

has all of the strategy that has maintained the British-born developer's loyal fan base.

Betrayal at Krondor

DYNAMIX

Version Previewed: IBM PC

Novelist Raymond Feist was creating role-playing games long before Dungeons & Dragons achieved its international popularity, but when his prose career took off, his game-writing was left behind.

Now Dynamix brings Feist's Riftwar saga to life in its new computer fantasy role-playing game, *Betrayal at Krondor*, the first of several games set in the world of Midkemia.

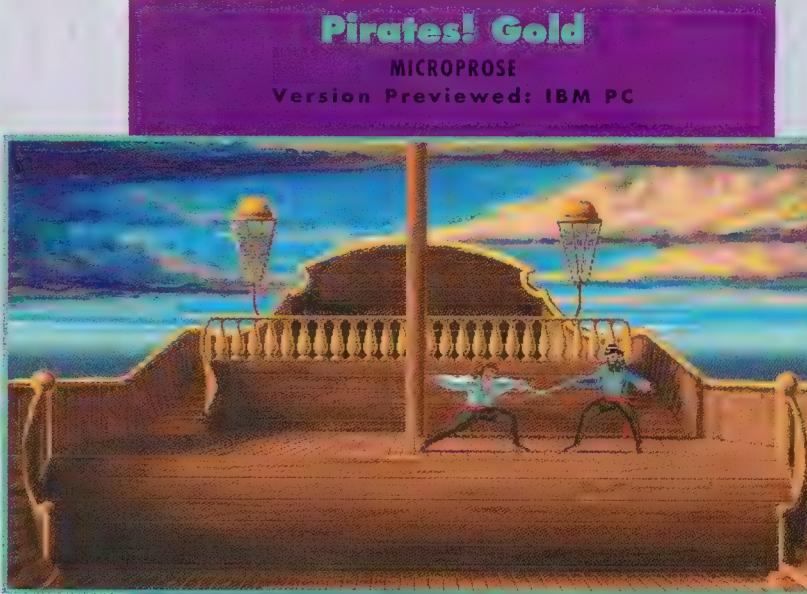
The unwritten rule of RPGs seems to be "the longer the story, the shorter the game," but *Krondor* is the exception. To finish all of the quests in the game's nine chapters will most likely take more than 100 hours. Luckily, *Krondor* has an auto-mapper.

Feist may not have the name recognition of Tolkien, Clarke or King, but Dynamix is determined to make *Krondor* more visually impressive than anything based on Feist's colleagues' works. The game features 2,500 frames of rotoscoped animation to make everything from battle to spellcasting look as "realistic" as possible. Using 3Space technology developed for *Red Baron* and *Aces of the Pacific*, the background smoothly rotates whenever characters change direction and scrolls forward and reverses to reflect the appropriate movement.

Story's important, but what's an RPG without combat? Besides horrifying enemies and plenty of gore, *Krondor*'s battle system features 3-D chesslike maneuvering of characters, allowing tacticians to have a field day. If that isn't enough, *Krondor* features the one artifact long neglected by other RPGs: the glory hand (it comes from the corpse of the thief who was hung at midnight).



The more he screamed, for two hours the warrior had thrashed under the ministrations of Northwarden's torturer but his information had been of little use.
"Talk, damn you!" Arutha commanded. "With one word you could halt this battle here and now!"

**Pirates! Gold**

MICROPROSE

Version Previewed: IBM PC



Sid Meier's *Pirates!* is one of the greatest action-strategy games of all time, earning a horde of industry awards. It's also a bit dated in terms of graphics, sound and the number of cities to be looted. Determined not to let this classic vanish, MicroProse is producing *Pirates! Gold*.

Containing all of the action of the original game, with updated sound and graphics, as well as a much larger world to explore, this will be an update that even owners of the original game will want to buy. After seeing these shots, you can include us in that crowd.



COMPUTER
GAME
REVIEWS

The Terminator 2029

BETHESDA SOFTWORKS

Version: IBM PC (\$69.95)

SOUND/MUSIC	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
GRAPHICS	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
PLAYABILITY	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
OVERALL	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

A couple of years ago, Accolade released *Day of the Viper*, a sci-fi maze battle game that I played with obsessive abandon for weeks. Now Bethesda has decided to monopolize my time with *The Terminator 2029*. It takes sci-fi maze battling to new levels and makes my obsession with *Day of the Viper* look like a minor flirtation. I started playing two days ago, and finally had to set an alarm to remind myself to quit long enough to eat. I feel a little put out that I had to stop to write this review.

The Terminator 2029 does not have many socially redeeming qualities or, aside from the name and a plot element or two, much connection with the Arnold Schwarzenegger special-effects extravaganzas. What it certainly does have is a perfect balance of mission, exploration and battle, all melded into a *Cyberpunkish* nightmare world where you are, of course, the only hope for the survival of mankind. Who needs socially

redeeming qualities when you can blast bad guys and save the entire universe?

The premise of the game has you wearing sophisticated battle armor that provides you with (barely) enough firepower and protection to give you a fighting chance against terminators and the other weaponry guarding the malevolent Skynet. You are assigned specific, progressively more difficult, missions by the Resistance, and, if you succeed, you move on to the next mission. Too often, mission-oriented games start out at too difficult a level, but *The Terminator* doesn't make that mistake; I finished the first mission in a matter of a couple of hours, the second in about twice that time and I have been working on the third for much longer than I like to think about. What that tells me is that the game's programmers and designers have done their job very well, drawing the player in gradually and increasing the difficulty only as the player is ready for it.

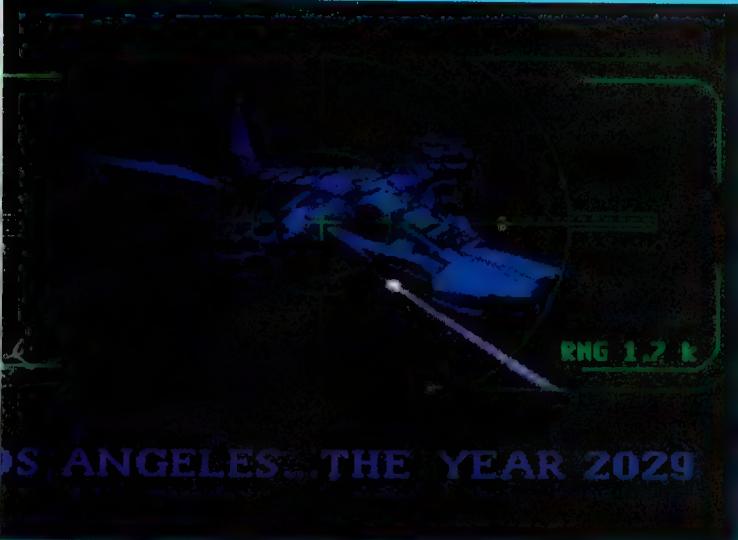
The Terminator 2029 is very well done technically, too. The interface is seamless and easy to learn; I used the practice mode for about 20 minutes, went to the first mission and, by the

time I'd been killed off a half-dozen times (about another 20 minutes), the game mechanics had become second nature. I do, however, have a couple of minor complaints. The game can be played either entirely with the key-



board or with a combination of keyboard and mouse, but movement is only done with the keyboard. In a maze game, I prefer to move with the mouse; a clickable on-screen movement pad or other mechanism should have been provided. I'm also a little irritated with having to reselect my weaponry after getting killed off. Getting back into play after being killed off is fast, and I do realize that being





able to reconfigure my weapons can sometimes make the difference between success and failure in a mission, but the game should retain the previous selections in case I don't want to change them. Once into the game, though, picking and using weapons is fast and easy (and a good thing too—things can get frantic all too quickly), and using the status, repair, auto-mapping and options functions is just as smoothly handled. What this adds up to is an interface that does not get in the way of playing the game.



SHYNET HAS SET UP A GUN TOWER NEAR THE ENTRANCE TO THE COMPLEX. YOU HAVE TO DESTROY THE GUN TOWER TO ENTER THE LAB. YOU MAY WANT TO TRY SOME FUSION GRENADES.



The 256-color VGA graphics are stylish, well-drawn and greatly enhance the atmosphere of the game. The animation could have used a few more frames in places, but overall it's more than acceptable. The intro music is good, and the sound effects are some of the best I've ever heard. The blasts coming through my stereo were substantial enough to feel, not just hear. (I'm surprised my neighbors didn't call the National Guard to investigate the battle going on in my house.)

Good, fast-paced, arcade-style adventures like *The Terminator 2029* have become a rarity in recent years, and I'm delighted that Bethesda has done one that is so well worth playing. Obviously, *The Terminator 2029* isn't going to be to everyone's taste, nor is it for every-

one's machine; the documentation strongly recommends at least a 20 MHz 386 machine. The faint of heart and the slow of reflex should also probably try a different game, but, if you have enough computer horsepower and a proficient trigger-finger, *The Terminator 2029* has more than ample rewards. Bethesda has been long overdue for a hit, and, as far as I'm concerned, it has one with *The Terminator 2029*.

—Tom Malcom

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EDITORS' CORNER

AE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
CB	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
DM	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
MD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

This month's Editors' Corner is a special "round robin" edition. Each of the four editors has rated the same four games: CD, Mike and Chris rated them, while I, AE, rated them. The scores are as follows:

The Incredible Machine

DYNAMIX

Version: IBM PC (\$49.95)

SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Back when only Bruce Wayne could afford a home computer, budding engineers and tinkerers channeled their creative energies into a game called *Mousetrap*. The joy in *Mousetrap* lay not in winning the game but assembling the dozens of plastic pieces into an inefficient but visually stunning plastic creation. Unfortunately, *Mousetrap* had only one configuration and limited experimentation.

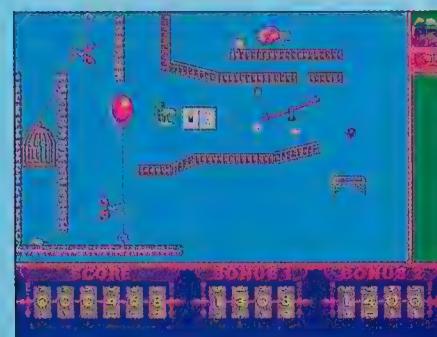
Far too many years later, Jeff Tunnell's new game *The Incredible Machine* provides all of the excitement of *Mousetrap* with more tools, over eighty puzzles and even power over the forces of nature.

The Incredible Machine is deceptively dry and simple. Players are presented with a single blue screen containing a number of objects and a goal. A sidebar contains additional objects, not all of which are necessarily essential to complete the puzzle. Players place the objects with the mouse and then "start" the machine. This generally means making sure a ball is hovering above a mouse cage, a switch or a teetertotter.

Tools include a variety of balls (including tennis, baseball and bowling), light bulbs, treadmills, guns, dynamite, trampolines and jack-in-the-boxes. The tools aren't solely limited to mechanical objects. Players must also learn how to manipulate Pokey the cat. This means learning his behavioral responses: How close must mice be to entice him? And how soon will he devour the rodents? Are shattered fishbowls that much more enticing than ones containing a swimming (rather than suffocating flopping) fish? Dying fish may upset animal rights activists, but many of the puzzles involve saving the animals, including deflecting bullets in the gunfight between Pokey and the goldfish. Similarly, the monkeys will ride their exercycles as long as they can see a banana, but drop anything on their heads and you've lost your engine.

What makes *The Incredible Machine* deserve its name is not its sim-

plicity but its subtleties. Players will soon come to the scientific deduction that things "feel right," as if this is how the objects would behave in nature under identical conditions (animals and explosives excepted). This explains why *The Incredible Machine* unfortunately tends to crawl on slower machines. The program is constantly checking the objects to make sure everything



works in accordance with the laws of physics (at least as Tunnell has pared them down). There's some serious math going down here.

Physics? Engineering? Math? Hold on, don't stop reading! All you need to know is the relative weights of objects like bowling balls and tennis balls—and which direction gravity pulls objects. *The Incredible Machine's* assortment of puzzles contains enough challenge for anyone who proudly wears a pocket protector as well as the ultimate in bubble-headed fairy tale fans.

Graphics are clean yet detailed, and the music from puzzle to puzzle is more varied than in any recent release that even uses the sound as a major selling point.

In case any budding Newton breezes through the puzzles, *The Incredible Machine* also has a free-form mode that allows not only use of all tools but the manipulation of gravity and air pressure. Add to this official contests for homespun puzzles and add-on disks with even more challenges, and *The Incredible Machine* most likely becomes the puzzle game to buy in 1993. And remember, this is only the February issue.

—David S. Moskowitz

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EDITORS' CORNER

AE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
CB	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
DM	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
MD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

SUBVERSION™ 1.0



Macintosh 16 color screen shown

Game Created by Captain Byte's Bit Shop
Box Artwork by Josh Stigers
Computer Artwork by Steve Laveirge

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War has been declared! As Commander of the Attack Submarine "Nautilus", your mission is to engage any and all enemy vessels within the region and obliterate them. Warning! They are armed with high tech equipment and they are out to sink you! Challenge and sink destroyers with either a speedy torpedo or a nuclear-tipped missile. Blow enemy submarines out of the water as they close in on you. Dodge the cumbersome but sensitive mines—snag a cable and it's off to a watery grave. Send out your frogmen for some demolition work.

Watch your resources! With only two supply ships, you'll have to be careful. Use them unwisely and you may find yourself sinking helplessly towards an implosive end.

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Dune IIWESTWOOD STUDIOS/VIRGIN
Version: IBM PC (\$59.99)

SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Back in the October '92 issue, when I reviewed the original version of *Dune*, I called it one of 1992's most exciting computer games. *Dune* was a visually striking hybrid of action/strategy and adventure that captured the very essence of the novel and motion picture.

While Cryo (the software development house that created *Dune*) was completing finishing touches on the original game, Westwood Studios had already begun piecing together the sequel. Rather than a sequel, *Dune II* seems to be more of a co-release. It doesn't take place before or after the first *Dune*, and no mention is made of many of the game's previously existing characters. Also, the story line deviates

from the first game in that there are three great Houses (Atreides, Harkonnen and Ordos) that are ordered to Dune by the emperor, to compete against each other both in battle and spice production for control of the planet.

Dune II has very little in common with the first title, especially in the graphics arena. A more heavy-laden strategic focus has been placed on the game. Gamers start out by selecting one of the three Houses to rule. Each of the Houses has a Mentat. (For those who are not familiar with the movie or novel, Mentats are human computers that are used as advisers by the rulers of the different Houses.) The Mentat offers information and suggestions on buildings, structures, military vehicles and other items. Your Mentat will also inform you of the current mission's objectives and spice production quotas.

Game play is presented from an overhead perspective. A main window displays the current viewing position and immediate playfield, which is part of a larger map that is shown in a secondary window on the lower right of the screen.

Each of the game's levels starts off with a single factory and predetermined amount of credits. Using those funds, you must build a spice production facility and military base wherefrom you launch attacks against the other Houses.



House Ordos was originally formed by a group of insecure wealthy families, and has evolved into a powerful cartel that is driven by a lust for credits and the desire to control and manipulate.



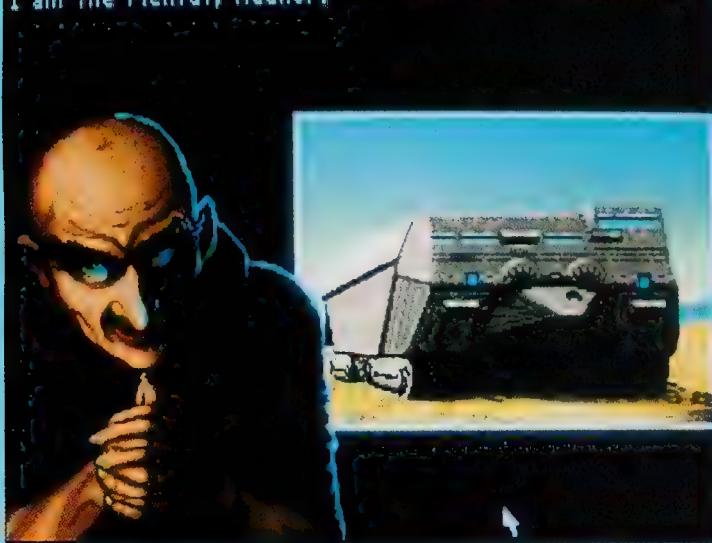
Terrain exploration is also an important part of the game. Enemy locations and spice caches must be located in order to succeed. The more spice retrieved, the more credits you'll get to build and buy armaments. Though retrieving spices and earning credits for them is a major part of the game, the main objective is the military conquest of the two other Houses to win control of Dune.

The game's graphics and sound are not as good as in the first *Dune*, but Westwood has placed the emphasis more on game play rather than its aesthetics. The play control mechanism is clean and not overbearing; a simple point-and-click system is employed.

Conclusively, *Dune II* is an excellent action-strategy game that wins high points in game play, but falls short of its predecessor's achievements in certain areas.

—Mike Davila

I am the Mentat, Radnor.

**EDITORS' CORNER**

AE 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

CB 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

DM 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

MD 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

The Humans

GAMETEK

Version: IBM PC (\$39.95)

SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Grab your loincloth and spear and watch out for dinosaur droppings: *The Humans*, GameTek's comic puzzle game, is here.

Evolution wasn't easy, and puzzle games are difficult to create as well. To begin with, the puzzles must be intricate enough to hold the interest of the seasoned problem solver without alienating the novice. Secondly, to attract a wide audience, the game must be fun—and fun to look at. Psygnosis' *Lemmings* succeeded admirably in both cases, and it went on to become (one of) the biggest-selling puzzle games ever. Now *The Humans*, which asks the player to direct the evolution of a tribe of Stone Age humans, tries for the same appeal. *The Humans* ultimately fails to fully engage the player, however; for, while its puzzles are frequently challenging, the game is often repetitive and static.

In *The Humans* the player must guide a tribe of humans through more than 50 levels. On each level, the player must use a set number of tribe members and objects (spears, torches, ropes, wheels) to move at least one tribe member to a given destination on the screen within a set time limit. Bushes and man-eating dinosaurs impede the tribe's efforts. Both the time limit and the number of humans provided vary according to which of the three difficulty levels is chosen at the beginning of the game.

Each level presents a variation on the classic platform-game screen: Vertical movement is achieved by ladders, ropes or human pyramids, while tribe members can move horizontally from platform to platform with the help of bridges or pterodactyls, or by using a spear as a vaulting pole. The player controls one human at a time, orchestrating his

actions in order to complete each level. In the later levels, the tribe may have access to a witch doctor, who can transform humans into needed objects. One of the most wicked pleasures of *The Humans* is the magical transformation of man into a torch, spear or wheel.

The Humans' graphics are funny and especially good for a relatively static puzzle game. The game screens range from winter landscapes to swamps, and the animated sequences are excellent, ranging from man-swallowing dinosaurs to humans who hop in pain when their toes are run over by a wheel. The music is perfectly acceptable, though it can eventually become annoying and is easily turned off.

The puzzles themselves are often challenging, but the real enemy is the clock, especially at the higher difficulty levels, and herein lies one of the greatest flaws of the game. Movement in the game is very slow, and, as each human is controlled separately, it is often necessary to repeat an action several times in a row (e.g., vault from one platform to the next, throw back spear, switch human, pick up spear, vault, throw, switch, etc.). If several such actions are required on one level, this can be very frustrating. These long, repetitive movements drain much of the fun from *The Humans*.

Lemmings succeeded largely because it combined constant action with solid puzzles; the lack of speed and the repetitiveness of *The Humans* should limit its appeal. Puzzle lovers should find this game amusing and challenging, others should bypass this corner of the evolutionary map.

—David N. Eadington

GameTek

2999 NE 191st St., Suite 800
N. Miami Beach, FL 33180
(305) 935-3995



EDITORS' CORNER

AE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
CB	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
DM	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
MD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

WaxWorks

HORRORSOFT/ACCOLADE

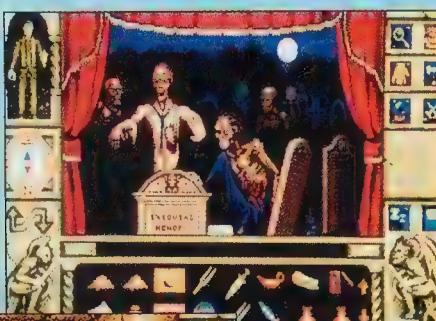
Version: IBM PC (\$59.95)

SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Horrorsoft's instant success in the computer-gaming horror field was brought about by *Elvira* and *Elvira II: The Jaws of Cerberus*. Carrying on its tradition of pixelized decapitations, mutilations and coagulated blood, Horrorsoft introduces its latest endeavor, *WaxWorks*.

A curse has loomed over a family's history for years, laid down by a punished witch. For each set of twins born, one child would belong to darkness and the other to light. And now the curse has taken its toll again, this time with you and your twin brother, who has disappeared to fulfill his destiny as the evil "other half." Using Uncle Boris' wax-works scenes, you'll travel to four distinct locations in your family's history to dispose of the evil twin within that time.

The atmosphere is decidedly different in nature for each of the four wax-works. Victorian-era London and its search for Jack the Ripper is different in graphics and content from an abandoned mine shaft, which is complete with mutated plant men and a setting



that looks like a spoof of B horror movies.

It's no wonder then that *WaxWorks* relies so little on actual text and NPC interaction to deliver the horrifying feel. It's safe to say that Horrorsoft wanted to deliver sheer horror (and aftermaths of grotesque violence) through pictures alone, as the small amounts of conversation and scenic descriptions do nothing to induce spine-tingling sensations found in good horror novels. There's certainly nothing wrong with this, it just should be noted by any prospective buyer that horror, at least in this game, is a graphical feast, not a prosaic journey.

WaxWorks plays in similar fashion to *Elvira II*, using a large window to serve as the player's eyes into the world, with a separate inventory screen that occupies the bottom of the screen. How you go about interacting with the various locations is fairly straightforward; to grab an



item, click on its image in the view window and select the take icon. If an item you're carrying can be used in the immediate area, select it from your inventory and a special command will appear detailing the specific action that may be performed with the item.

But it's here that *WaxWorks*' interface shows signs of inconsistency. Some items are used through a separate command that appears on-screen, while other items require a "click-and-drag" technique to take effect (which isn't completely explained in the manual). Add to this the lack of feedback from the program whenever something doesn't seem to work: Instead of a message along the lines of "You can't do that," or "That item doesn't work here," you're greeted with absolutely nothing, making it difficult to determine whether the item you're trying to use is the wrong one or whether there's anything to be done at all.

WaxWorks, though a little less than intuitive with the interface, is probably the best yet from Horrorsoft. It fills the void when it comes to computer-gaming horror, and, with a saturation of more fantasy and science-fiction games than ever before, a small vacation to the macabre displays of the waxworks might be the break you've been looking for.

—Danny Han

Accolade
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San Jose, CA 95129
(408) 985-1700

EDITORS' CORNER

AE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
CB	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
DM	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
MD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10



Mega Io Mania

UBI SOFT

Version: IBM PC (\$49.95)

SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Already a cult favorite in Europe, UBI Soft finally brings its fast-paced strategy war game to U.S. shores. Players weary of just another "god sim" are in for a pleasant surprise.

Despite slight similarities to Electronic Arts' *PowerMonger*, this one-player contest is wholly original and ultimately more playable. The designers deftly combine the best elements of a strategic board game with brisk, real-time action. Add an intuitive player interface, audacious humor and lively special effects, and you've got the makings of a game with broad appeal and long-lasting challenge.

Players assume the role of a power-hungry god, battling up to three rival computer deities for control of a new

planet. Each team commands a race of people, and you must build the machineries of war to wipe out the competition. Battles are fought on a series of 27 islands, divided into nine groups of three. Each group, called an Epoch, must be conquered before moving on to the next, more challenging set. Only the most tenacious players will make it to the 28th island for the final "Mother of All Battles," dubbed *Mega Io Mania*.

As the game progresses, so must your army's weapon and defense capabilities. Each Epoch automatically moves the player up the technological ladder, from 9500 B.C. to the year 2001 A.D. and beyond. Begin with primitive sticks and stones, slowly advancing to bows and arrows, cannons, machine guns, bi-planes, jet fighters, nuclear missiles and laser weaponry.

Game play revolves around building increasingly better weapons to defend your base and wipe out the enemy. This requires the skillful allocation of men to gather natural resources, manufacture the designs, defend your property and fight the battles. Assign too many in one area, however, and another falls behind. Neglect manufacturing, for example, and your soldiers soon run out of weapons. Create too many soldiers, and there's no one left to mine resources or fill production needs.

Making matters worse, each team is allowed only 100 men per Epoch, to be dispersed sparingly among the three battles. Winning requires expert task and resource management, along with a willingness to take risks. There's also a bit of diplomacy involved, as players can request temporary alliances to defeat stronger adversaries. Some save-game passwords are available, but only at the very beginning of each Epoch.



The action unfolds at a fever pitch, gaining momentum the further you advance. An icon-based user interface allows you to quickly view, move and manipulate elements under your control. One of the game's best features is the way it integrates digitized voices to communicate with players. "Ergonomically terrific!" shouts a tiny voice upon completion of a design. "Tower critical!" warns another, prompting your immediate attention. This also allows you to multitask several assignments without constantly monitoring their progress.

The graphics are terrific, especially in the later stages of the game. The sight of tiny people armed with machine guns, or zipping around in airplanes, will keep you in stitches. Conversely, the game's only shortcoming is its limited playing surface. Islands range in size from two to 16 sectors, or one screen per sector. When three or four armies compete, the landscape becomes horribly crowded. All the necessary conditions are present for aggression.

Mega Io Mania offers a dazzling blend of fast action and challenging strategy not to be missed.

—Scott A. May



EDITORS' CORNER

AE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
CB	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
DM	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
MD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Amazon: Guardians of Eden

ACCESS

Version: IBM PC (\$59.95)

SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

When the people at Access aren't out surveying golf courses for *LINKS 386 Pro*, they spend their time pushing the limits of computer hardware in the adventure-game arena. *Amazon: Guardians of Eden* is the latest game from Access, and it takes full advantage of the best computer graphics and sound hardware available today.

Amazon is a cinematic adventure set during 1957 in the deepest jungles of the Amazonian rain forest. The game features giant ants, rope bridges, insane scientists, lost villages and, of course, scantily clad Amazon women—all the makings of a classic American "B" movie, or something we'd see on the USA cable network after midnight on a Friday night.

In addition to the outstanding graphics, *Amazon* features full-motion video screens accompa-

nied by digitized speech. These little movies pop up within the adventure as the player runs into the game's puzzles.

Great graphics demand great sound, and *Amazon* doesn't disappoint there either. Access developed Real Sound, a patented sound system that offers decent sound from any standard internal PC speaker, and major sound cards are also supported. With a Sound Blaster or compat-

ible board, the game offers a MIDI soundtrack in addition to digital sound effects and human speech.

The bare minimum requirement for the game is a 286 IBM PC running at 12 MHz with 540K RAM, but a 386 IBM PC running at 33 MHz with an SVGA graphics card is recommended. *Amazon* comes on seven high-density 3.5" floppy disks, and the game requires over eight megs of free hard drive space. Also included is an excellent manual that holds a new gamer through game configuration, even explaining boot disk creation, should the game require more memory

than is currently available on the player's computer.



Amazon features all the standard adventure game controls: walk, look, take, speak, etc. Some of the game's puzzles are time dependent and many are quite challenging, so be prepared to die quite often. (Death is usually pretty gory and shown in full-motion video, accompanied by an appropriate sound.)

What if you get stuck? There's no need to order a hint book, since the game comes with an extensive and very welcome on-screen help menu! The player starts the game with 170 "help points." Each time help is consulted, points are deducted and the player's score drops. The hints can be purposely vague or they can all but give away the solution. The better the hint, the more you pay.

Amazon is lots of fun and quite comical; it borrows heavily from 1950s sci-fi and jungle movies. More than once I found myself laughing when my character slipped up and died a gruesome death—that's all part of the game's atmosphere.

Amazon is a clear winner. The puzzles are involved and do require some patience, but the on-screen help ensures that the game won't be too easy or too hard, regardless of the player's experience.

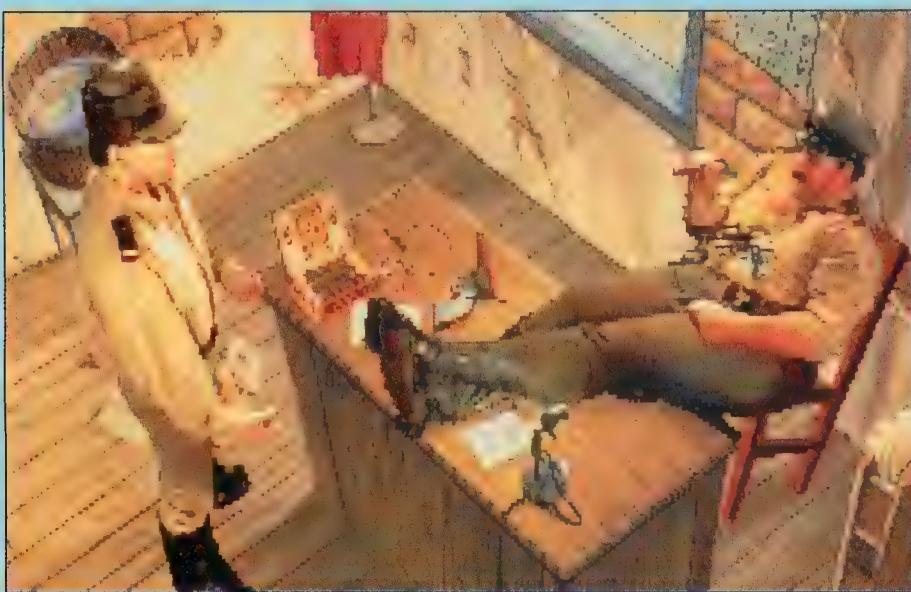
—Peter T. Szymonik

Access Software Inc.
4910 W. Amelia Earhart Drive
Salt Lake City, UT 84116-2837
(801) 359-2900

EDITORS' CORNER

AE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
CB	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
DM	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
MD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Peter T. Szymonik: Peter is the "Real Father of Adventure Games" and Director of the Real Sound Division of Access Software Inc. He is a computer game designer and producer.



MicroLeague Action Sports Soccer

MLS

Version: IBM PC (\$39.95)

SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Your goal in *Action Sports Soccer* is to guide the Manchester United Football Club to victory in one of three United Europe Football Association tournaments. The game features over 170 actual European teams and rosters, with some players whom you may see here in the U.S. during the upcoming World Cup.

The game uses an icon menu system to set its various options. You can set the real-time length of a match, adjust the skill levels of players from both your team and your opponent's, align your players in different strategic formations and monitor a variety of statistics over the course of a tournament.

Tournaments can be saved after any match, and up to seven different tournaments can be stored at any one time. In between tournament matches you

can play a friendly exhibition match, useful when trying to determine which formation may be more effective against a pending tournament foe.

Action Sports Soccer should really be called Manchester United vs. Europe, since all tournament play assumes you will control the Manchester squad. You can elect to control the opposing team in any match, but this is of little value as knocking Manchester out of the

tournament effectively ends the game. Even a two-player exhibition match requires one of you to be Manchester. I found that the inability to select a team other than Manchester for tournament or exhibition play quickly limited the game's appeal.

Action Sports Soccer is a visually attractive game. The icons are beautifully detailed and the graphics of the players and field are bright and colorful. The game scrolls from side to side smoothly but can be jittery when moving diagonally. The animation lacks the detail usually found in today's computer games, with players that seem to glide across the field rather than run. Goals and the issuance of penalty cards provide the only variety in animation.

This game is typical of software imported from Europe in that it only uses one of the PC's two joystick fire buttons. Consequently, the game requires a convoluted series of joystick movements when executing any



of the "skill" shots, and there is no way to manually select a different player on defense. While the joystick controls are marginally playable, the keyboard controls are horrendous. I'd like to meet the genius who decided that the Z, X, R and D keys should be used to move a player left, right, up and down the field.

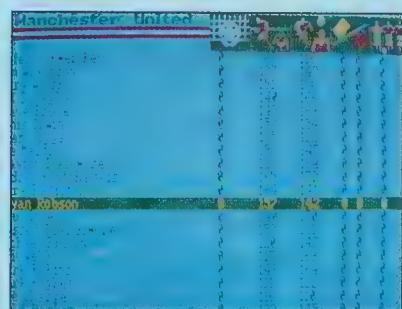
The game features some nice Ad Lib compatible music during the selection screens, but during actual game play all sound effects are relegated to the PC speaker. What little there is—the ref's whistle and the kicking of the ball—sounds fine, although the crowd is noticeably silent.

Action Sports Soccer is a good-looking game hampered by poor playability. If U.S. software publishers are going to keep importing games from countries where the port to the PC is an afterthought, they should take it upon themselves to improve the play mechanics before releasing the game here. A little effort by MicroLeague, who bills itself as "The Superstars in Sports Simulations," would have produced an excellent soccer game for this country's most popular personal computer platform.

—Jeffrey Tschiltsch
MicroLeague Sports Association
2201 Drummond Plaza
Newark, DE 19711-5711
(302) 368-9990

EDITORS' CORNER

AE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
CB	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
DM	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
MD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10



Discovery

IMPRESSIONS

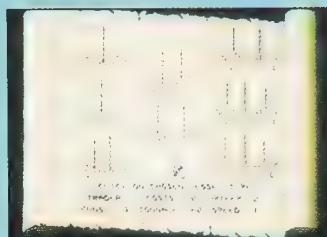
Versions: Amiga (\$59.95),
IBM PC (\$59.95)

SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

I positively ache for this game. It is one of the most engrossing games I've played in months, but it's spoiled by low production values. *Discovery* falls in that twilit region between commercial and public domain grade software; it has definitely crossed the line into the commercial, but looks decidedly amateurish. Sad to say, we live in a world where, if looks aren't everything, they're most of it. *Discovery* has a heart of gold, but it's hard to see through to it.

Ostensibly, *Discovery* is a simulation of Columbus' voyage, timed, no doubt, to cash in on last year's 500th anniversary of his expedition to America. In reality, it's an obsessively playable system simulation along the lines of *SimAnt* and *Populous*, with a little *Railroad Tycoon* thrown in for good measure. It isn't as good as any of those, but, if the developers bring in a good artist/ animator and a sound programmer, their next release could be.

The game begins with the player going to the bank, buying ships and then sending them out either to explore or to trade. Once a ship finds land, you establish a port and begin building a colony. You can send out more than one ship, though I found things quickly got out of control trying to keep up with more than two or three. There is so much to keep track of—finances,



building, morale, competitors, natives, trade and so on—that buying and sending out ships requires careful timing.

There are several variations on the game, such as playing until there's only one survivor, winning by having the most money and winning by finding El Dorado. *Discovery* has also achieved some staying power by not limiting itself solely to Columbus and the Americas. There are four other worlds included to explore and colonize.

The play engine is terrific and the interface is smooth, easy to use and entirely mouse-driven, but *Discovery* has big problems with the graphics, animation and sound. The graphics are crude, and the animation artless. There are a couple of decently drawn interlude screens, but the main play screen is flat, with sky occupying the top third and a representation of ocean or land in the lower part. Perspective is apparently an unknown concept to the designer. Ships and people move up and down in total defiance of the laws of gravity. It looks inept. The

sound effects aren't much better, with a pause often present before the appropriate sound. Better programming or more skillful sample editing could

easily have fixed this. I also have a quibble with the sea battles, which take far too long and are too simplistic and repetitive for the amount of time they consume.

If I'd never played another simulation, I would have thought *Discovery* was one of the best games ever. I have played other simulations, though, and, when compared to the likes of *SimLife* or *Civilization*, it comes off a couple of generations behind the times. Despite its serious flaws, I do recommend *Discovery*; it plays so well that I'm willing to forgive it and keep on exploring and colonizing.

—Tom Malcom

Impressions

7 Melrose Drive
Farmington, CT 06032
(203) 676-9002

EDITORS' CORNER

AE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
CB	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
DM	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
MD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

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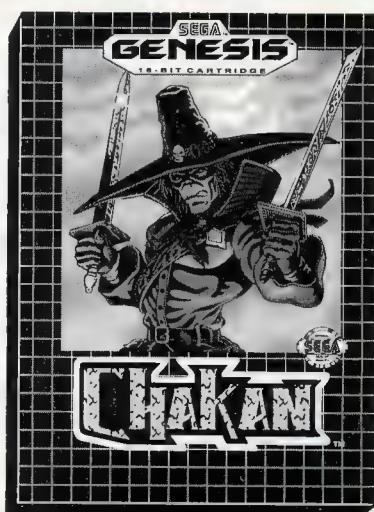
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Task Force 1942

MICROPROSE

Version: IBM PC (\$69.95)

SOUND/MUSIC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
GRAPHICS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
PLAYABILITY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
OVERALL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

In the year 1942, some of the bloodiest naval surface battles in modern history were being waged between American and Japanese naval forces in the southern Pacific. Today, MicroProse gives war gamers a chance to relive those harrowing battles and assume the role of the brave men who fought in them with the release of *Task Force 1942*.

After selecting which side to fight on—either Japanese or American—players can then choose from a variety of historical missions, a campaign option and a mission creator, which allows customized engagements to be created. The eight historical missions are taken directly from World War II naval history, with all of the correct ships and captains used in the actual engagements.

A plethora of real-world variables are available, including the ability to toggle on and off friendly fire, dud torpedoes, poor visibility, incorrect enemy sightings and crew fatigue. Even the firing of ship's guns is modeled on real-world data, with shells arcing through the sky on ballistically correct trajectories.

Although *Task Force 1942* supports both daytime and nighttime missions,

the latter are especially impressive. During nighttime battles, ships are briefly illuminated by the firing of guns and exploding shells.

All of the ships used in *Task Force 1942* are 3-D, solid-filled objects modeled with a surprising amount of detail: Gun turrets turn and fire, black smoke billows from stricken vessels and white, foamy wakes follow the passage of each warship. Static pictures are rendered in a style very reminiscent of early color television, with muted, soft-edged colors that successfully evoke a visual feel for the period. Sound and graphics are well done, including the chugging of ships engines and the firing of guns and torpedoes.

Only gun-toting surface ships are simulated in *Task Force 1942*; fans of World War II submarine combat should look to MicroProse's *Silent Service II* for gaming enjoyment. MicroProse is working on a companion simulation to *Task Force 1942* that focuses on carriers, tentatively titled *Flattops*, which is slated for release sometime this year.

Task Force 1942 is not without problems. Game play is a little slow on slower 386 machines, although owners of faster machines shouldn't have any problems. Managing a column of warships in hostile waters



under the cover of darkness can be quite a challenge; although the interface is well-designed and intuitive, novice gamers will be in for a short and bewildering trip to Davy Jones's locker during the first few missions.

In summary, *Task Force 1942* is one of the most intricately detailed and exhaustively

researched simulations ever produced by MPS Labs. Instead of giving in to market pressure to create a game that would appeal to a much wider audience, MicroProse focused its efforts on creating a specialized simulation of a short—but decisive—period of time in World War II, going for detail and accuracy rather than diluting the complexity of the game for the largest possible gaming audience. If you are looking for a gritty, challenging simulation of ship-to-ship ocean surface combat in World War II, *Task Force 1942* has the goods.

—Jeff James

MicroProse
180 Lakefront Drive
Hunt Valley, MD 21030
(301) 771-1151



EDITORS' CORNER

AE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
CB	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
DM	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
MD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

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The Ancient Art of War in the Skies is a well-designed and addicting war game, one that you can play at a strategic or tactical level—or, usually, a combination of both. However, although the computer can handle the details of tactical combat, you'll probably have a better chance of besting your opponents if you learn to handle these tasks personally. For that reason, before starting any of the campaigns, you should spend time in the training section, learning to dogfight and to accurately drop bombs. These skills are essential to your mastering the game.

Once you've mastered the tactical portion of the game (or at least become reasonably skillful), you're ready to start your first campaign, where you must consider the game's strategic elements. First, examine the campaign rules carefully. A comparison of your and your enemy's abilities will suggest a starting strategy. For example, if the enemy's factories can produce planes faster than yours, you should concentrate on disabling as many of his factories as you can, before they get a chance to churn out a force too powerful to deal with.

After examining a campaign's rules, give the overview map the same attention. This map shows the starting placement of both armies' capitals, factories, towns, supply depots, forts, cities and so on. It also shows the front lines and how the area depicted in the scenario has been divvied up between you and your opponent. The placement of these locations, obviously, must dictate your strategy. For example, in the aforementioned plane factory scenario, once you've decided that you need to go for your opponent's factories (based on the campaign rules), the overview map will show you where those factories are located and how you can best use your air force to destroy or capture them.

Deciding whether to destroy or capture an enemy's location is an important decision. In the plane factory example, you could better equal the odds if you captured as many factories as possible, rather than just destroying them. This way, they could produce planes for you. Look for enemy locations near the front lines, and then use your bombers to push the front lines back past the loca-



tions you want to capture. Enemy locations far beyond the front lines should be destroyed by your bombers, since it's unlikely that you'll ever reach them.

And speaking of bombing, try to send a full squad of three bombers on a bombing attack. It's difficult to completely destroy a target zone with less. Also, use the bomber's recon photo to carefully plan your attack route. For example, your first bomber may want to concentrate on clearing a way for the rest of the squad, taking out antiaircraft guns, as well as main targets. Then, the rest of the squad can safely clear remaining targets. Remember, too, that a single bomber can make many approaches on the same target zone. Sometimes it's advantageous to fly just over the border of the target zone, bomb an easily accessible target and immediately leave the area in order to approach it from a different direction.

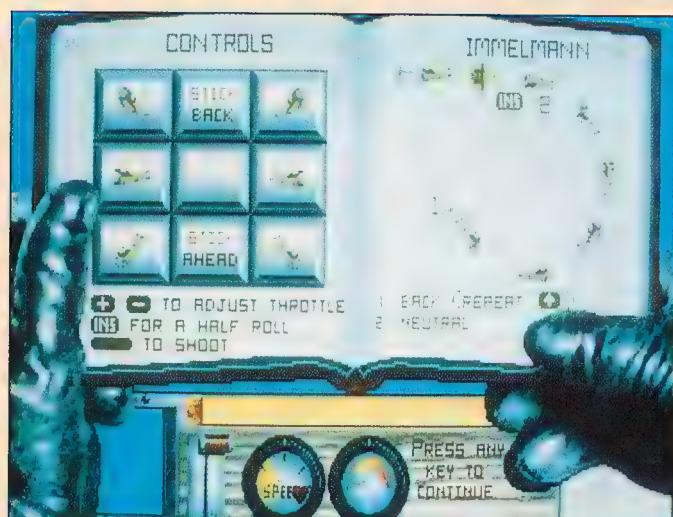
Use your bombs judiciously. Because most bomb-target sites are far from your airfields, never leave a target zone without dumping all your bombs (unless the plane is badly damaged, and you don't dare send the plane back in). It'll take you a long while to get back to your airfield, reload and go back to finish the job. In fact, by the time you get back, the target may have been fully repaired. Also, carefully target your bomb drops so that you can take out as many targets as possible with a single load of bombs. The better your aim, the more damage you can do in one attack.

Finally, remember that the bombers are not as maneuverable as fighters. It's always a good idea to send fighters along with bombers, so you can protect the valuable bombers from enemy attacks. However, it's even more important that you leave enough fighters at home to defend your own important locations, especially your supply routes, cities, factories and, of course, your capital. Defeat comes quickly to commanders who leave their homeland open to attack.

By mastering both the tactical and strategic elements of *The Ancient Art of War in the Skies*, you'll be a pilot extraordinaire—a hero to both your men and the folks at home. Remember: It's up to you to keep the democratic world safe from the ambitions of those who would tear it down. Happy bombing!



Novices should spend a lot of time in the training area, learning to dogfight and bomb precisely.



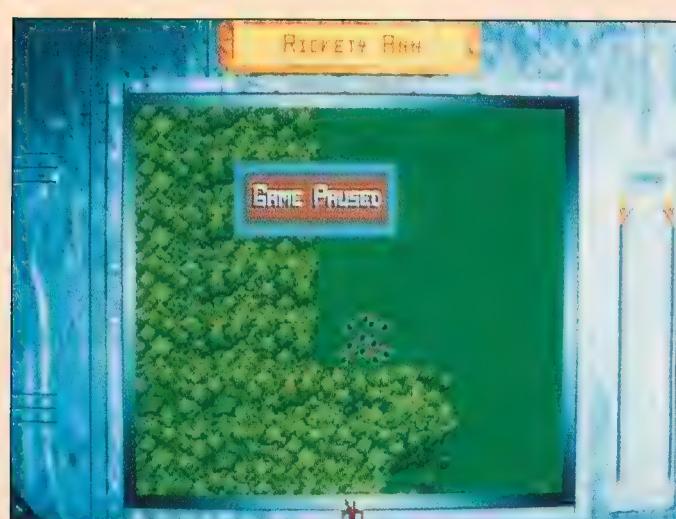
You can control your aircraft using a mouse, joystick or the keyboard. Try all types of controls. Some may work better than others in different situations. For example, dogfights seem easier with a mouse, whereas bombing runs need the extra precision of the keyboard.



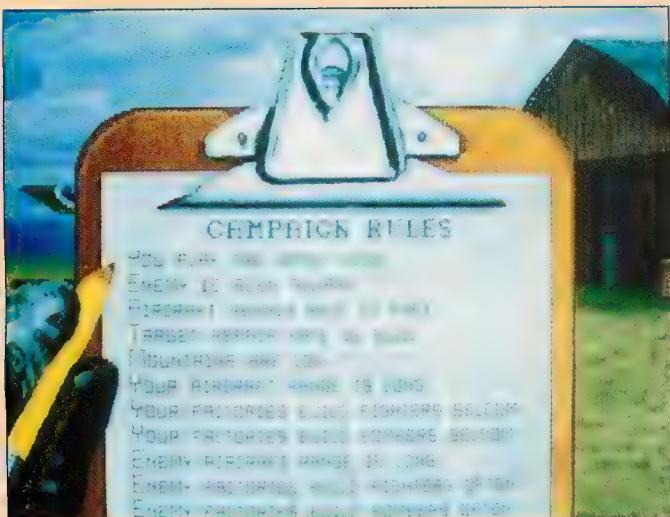
In dogfight training, fancy maneuvers are every bit as important as accurate shooting.



Bombing runs are especially difficult to master, since you must skillfully pilot your plane while timing your bomb drops to the second.



To be a successful bomber, learn to accurately position your plane over important targets.



When you start a campaign, study the rules carefully. Your strategy will be based at least partly on what you learn here.



The overview map provides additional information you need in order to formulate a winning strategy. Study it carefully.



Remember that you can run the game at three speeds. Set the game speed to slow in order to give you time to explore the map and plan attacks. Set the game speed to fast to get your planes quickly into action.



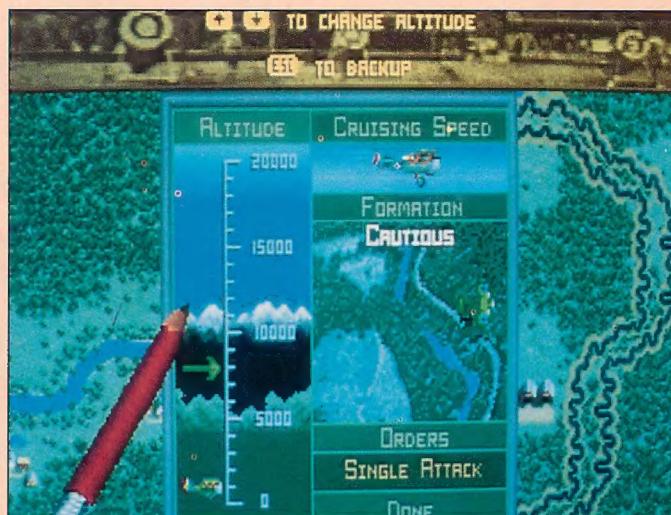
When examining the map display, keep an eye out for enemy aircraft. Use your fighters to intercept enemies approaching targets you need to defend.



Also, keep watch over the front lines, to be sure that none of your important locations, especially your capital, get overrun by enemy forces.



Your forts can hold back the front lines, but only if you don't allow the enemy to bomb them. Intercept approaching enemies as quickly as possible.



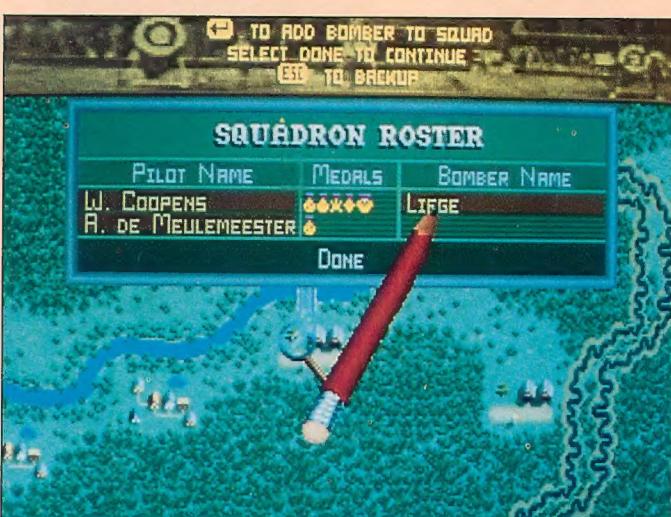
Your squads can include both fighters and bombers. Use the fighters to protect both your bombers and your home territory.



When sending planes on a mission, never forget to set their altitude. In the heat of battle, it's easy to send your planes flying into the side of a mountain. Also, take advantage of different flight formations, to give your squads the best chance of completing their missions.



Look for the icons that appear when attacks begin, so you can take over tactical duties. If the attack isn't on the visible part of the map, you can still keep track by watching the messages in the upper left of the screen.



Your recon maps let you set your bombers on the best attack route. Analyze the maps carefully before releasing your squad into the target area.

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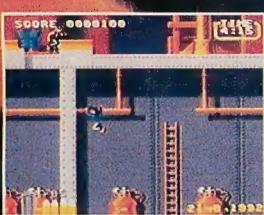
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